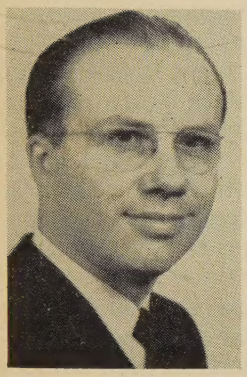
PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching



Ronald E. Osborn:

ECUMENICAL CHURCH

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By Dwight S. Large

v. 25
1954

PUTTING THE

WHAT then shall we do?" was the question raised by individuals among the anxious multitude witnessing the preaching of John the Baptist. Unless modern listeners ask the same question today, current preaching can do little to stimulate the admonition of James, "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."

Regularity of the sermon in Protestant worship has resulted in a stereotyped acceptance of the spoken word. The sermon is a portion of the service on Sunday and little more. Like the organ music, the choir and the formal reading of the scripture, the sermon "reposes" within the church and seldom is thought of as a bridge whereby faith travels into daily life. This is partly the fault of the preachers. We have not prepared our messages with the expectation that anyone will ask, "What then shall I do this week because of today's sermon?"

Follow-up Plan

In 1739, George Whitefield preached a sermon in Christ's Church, Spittlefields, London, on "Directions How To Hear Sermons." As one of his six directions, he urged his parishioners to "make a particular Application of every Thing that is deliver'd to your own Hearts." Much as some Protestants today might wish to make such application, the content of many sermons offers little guidance. Henry Sloane Coffin is correct in claiming that the gospel is no novelty to a congregation of reasonably regular churchgoers. "The chief difficulty with most sermons," he says, "is that they lack sufficient content and do not convey what they have with sufficient precision to hold the attention of the listeners." The sermon can, however, become precise and pointed, both for the preacher and the congregation.

For three different periods, the congregations of two Methodist churches in Michigan, and more recently of a church in Philadelphia, have been asked to share in a specific follow-up plan based on the Sunday sermon. Preceding the first two experiments, a small group of adults met one evening a week for eight weeks to discuss with the minister the application of each sermon preached during that period and try to work out a pattern for sermon follow-up.

It was decided that the action-suggestions should not be printed in the worship bulletin nor passed out by the ushers. The bulletin was to mention the fact that the suggestion sheets would be available at the conclusion of the service. The church secretary would place these on small tables near each exit immediately before the hymn that precedes the sermon. This procedure has been followed deliberately. The suggestions are available, but individuals must *choose* to secure them— a choice that becomes in itself a part of the decision to join the group seeking to apply each sermon to daily living.

These suggestions are written late Friday or early Saturday, after the manuscript for the sermon has been finished, and are then mimeographed. Actually, the follow-up suggestions grow out of the final draft of the sermon itself. From the seven to ten ideas jotted down at this time, five for Sunday are selected. As is obvious from the sample sheet which follows, one suggestion always centers in daily Bible readings. Practically every list has one suggestion for the family as a group.

Changed Emphasis

Further experimentation in this emphasis on concretion by other clergymen would prove profitable. Experience shows, first, that the requirement to prepare five such suggestions has changed the emphasis of preaching. Certain subjects that enticed the preacher offer little when tested by the inquiry, "What will a sermon on this subject mean in the daily thinking and living of Dan, driving his taxi; or Don, working in medical research; or Jean, at home with four small children?"

Second, a few individuals have rediscovered the import of the pulpit. Very possibly the forecast of George Whitefield may prove true. In his "Directions How To Hear Sermons," he says, "Besides, this will be good Proof that you Sincerely desire to *do* as well as *know* the will of God and it might highly profit both Ministers and People, because God through your prayers will give a double Portion of his Holy Spirit, whereby they (ministers) will be enabled to instruct you more fully in the Things which pertain to the Kingdom of God."

Third, only a portion of the congregation— never over a third—take the sheets. Of those who

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A Creative Experiment of Interest to Every Preacher Who Is Concerned about the Results of His Preaching

SERMON TO WORK

respond, some probably fail to act, either in terms of the suggestions from the minister or in terms of their own application. A small number mail the suggestions to friends outside the city.

Fourth, the idea itself has so taken fire in the mind of one preacher that the effort to offer some type of What-Shall-We-Do? Sheet for each sermon has become a permanent part of the week's opportunities in his parish.

The suggestions listed below illustrate how one sermon was treated by the writer.

WHAT THEN SHALL WE DO?

These "actions" are suggested for those who hear the sermon "Your Religion and Your Work" and wish to follow it by definite action during the week.

I. *Here are five Biblical passages which can deepen the meaning of today's sermon.* You may wish to take a half hour to look them all up and read them at one time, asking, "What is God's message for *me* in these words?" Or you may wish to use them for daily devotions spread over five days of the week.

1st day, Matt. 20:20-27. Very important.
2nd day, John 13:1-15. Especially verse 15.
3rd day, John 5:1-17.
4th day, Psalm 90:1-17. Read aloud if possible.
5th day, Acts 5:1-11. Suppose this happened to dishonest men!

II. *Find time early in the week to examine your own work.* Where do you need help in practicing your faith? Which of these three areas concerns you?

(1) Your true religion is revealed in your work at the point where you, like individuals in most jobs, contact other persons.

(2) Your true religion is revealed in your work at the point where you, like individuals in most jobs, face routine, dull repetition.

(3) Your true religion is revealed in your work at the point where you, like individuals in most jobs, make moral decisions.

Does one of these three points seem unimportant to you? Is this true due to the actual situation in your work, or is this true because you have a blind spot in this regard?

III. *Perhaps the best thing you can do right now is to write The Layman's Movement,* 347 Madison Ave., New York 17, N. Y., and ask for a free reprint of the article "Going to Work With God on Monday" by Wallace Speers. Read it carefully when you receive it, maybe once a week for a month.

IV. *Better yet, send 35 cents to the Department of the Church and Economic Life, National Council of Churches,* 297 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y., for the booklet called "The North American Lay Conference on the Christian and His Daily Work." This booklet of 65 pages on how to be Christian at work has specific suggestions for sixteen different occupational groups, including attorneys, educators, scientists, technicians, labor leaders, farm operators, ordinary laborers, and persons employed in government service, management, health services, insurance, mass communications, service and sales.

V. *Write out for yourself, in 250 words or less, "What it means for me to try to be a Christian in my job."* Try to be specific. Remember you are writing for yourself. Maybe you would like to share your report with someone; if not, seal it in an envelope, place it in your desk, and mark it for opening one year from now. That will be a good time to read it again and see if you measured up to your own statement of purpose as a Christian in your job. Maybe, from the experience of this year, you can improve your statement next year.

Prayer

For the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches to be held at Evanston, Ill., August 15-31, 1954

This prayer is commended for use in the churches by the central committee of the World Council.

ALMIGHTY God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom comes every good and perfect gift, we pray for the health and the power of thy church on earth. We confess that we have made it unworthy by our own unworthiness. We have clung to ways which are merely our own, and have caused the church to continue in division. We have failed to give ourselves only to thee, and have brought weakness upon the church. Renew in us a right mind, O Father, that there may be new life and power in thy church unto thy glory.

We pray for those who prepare for the coming Assembly of the World Council of Churches, that all that they do may be inspired by thy Spirit. May their thinking be courageous and true; may their plans work wholly to the good of thy church; may they serve with the devotion of a single mind stayed on thee alone.

We pray for those who will attend the Assembly, that in their preparations for their work there, they may seek thy purposes; that in their discussions, they may speak to defend only thy truth; that in their decisions they may follow the leading of thy Spirit unto the service of mankind.

We ask thy blessing upon this undertaking, that thou wilt judge, correct and redeem each part and step, that the whole may be a great sign unto men of the presence and the coming of our Lord, even Jesus Christ.

And now unto Him be glory in the church, through Christ Jesus, world without end. Amen.

Scandal of an Ecumenical Church

By Ronald E. Osborn

And men will come from east and west, and from north and south, and sit at table in the kingdom of God.—Luke 13:29.

The ways of God often scandalize good men. When he would reveal himself in the life of a nation, he passed over proud Babylon and glorious Egypt, and chose a people in slavery. To speak his word to Israel, he sent Amos—no priest, neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, but a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore trees. At the Incarnation,

> He came down to earth from heaven,
> Who is God and Lord of all,
> And His shelter was a stable,
> And His cradle was a stall.*

Throughout the ministry of Jesus, his words and acts jarred the assumptions and shocked the sensibilities of religious leaders time and again. And as for the gospel which the early church proclaimed—the crucifixion and resurrection of the Christ—it was a stumbling block to the Jews and sheer folly to the Greeks.

Watchword of Church

Yet the stone of stumbling God ordains as head of the corner. It is precisely at the point where the gospel offends our preconceptions that God is making known his good news. If we already knew it, it would not be news. And if it brought no judgment upon our folly and our sin, it would not be good. When we understand the Word of God and yield to it, what has been a scandal becomes an occasion of rejoicing. But only as we feel the pain and the shock to our conventional standards can we discern the true glory of what God is making known to us. Not until we see the foolishness of what is preached, its radical opposition to our notions, does it become wisdom for us. Not till we experience the weakness of the cross can it be our strength.

Now it is high time we applied this principle to our thinking about the ecumenical movement. Ecumenicity (ponderous expression that it is!) has become the watchword of the hour; at least a catchword; in some cases even a password. How we romanticize ecumenicity! It vies with cleanliness for the place on the scale of virtues next to godliness. To roll it off the tongue gives something of the superior air of driving a Cadillac. Yet until we stumble over the scandal, we shall miss the glory.

*Cecil Frances Alexander (1848).

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The Ecumenical Mood

Some twenty-five years ago Peter Ainslie published a famous book on the sin of sectarianism under the inspired title *The Scandal of Christianity*. The divisions within the body of Christ are a scandal, both to the church and to the world. Yet until we realize how scandalous the ecumenical fellowship also is, we shall not hear what God is trying to say to us in this century.

Consider our text. It is so beautiful, so appropriate to the mood of ecumenicity. But when we look at the context we see that this word belongs to the hard sayings of Jesus. One of the contented elect, self-assured in his predestinated piety, has just asked the Lord a question: "Will those who are saved be few?" Already he is savoring the expected reply: "Only a few. But never fear, favored child of God. A chief seat at the heavenly banquet is reserved for you." But that is not Jesus' answer. Rather does he warn that the door to salvation is narrow, that men who confide in their own virtue miss it altogether, and that they will be shocked to learn whom God has included. "You will weep and gnash your teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and you yourselves thrust out. And men will come from east and west, and from north and south and sit at table in the kingdom of God. And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last."

The Early Church

There is a stone of stumbling to every self-righteous man, to every denomination smug in its own tradition, to every national or cultural group within the church which thinks of its own ways as most pleasing to God. There is the scandal of the ecumenical fellowship. But only as we experience the pain of stumbling over it can we discern the will of God for his church.

Note, first of all, that the ecumenical fellowship created a scandal in New Testament times.

For so long the Jews had been the chosen people of God. They were Israelites, and to them belonged

the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship and the promises; to them belonged the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, was the Christ. The earliest disciples were Jews, and naturally they thought of the church as the fulfilment of God's promise to Israel. It was given to the chosen race.

Then persecution arose. Certain Jewish disciples took refuge at Antioch. As they proclaimed the gospel there, some Gentiles believed. And the church at Antioch received them into Christian fellowship. Gentiles! Uncircumcised dogs! It was unthinkable to the strict Jews in the church at Jerusalem. Soon missionaries were going out from Antioch and in a score of cities were gathering mixed congregations of Jews who kept the Mosaic law and of Gentiles who did not. Talk about open membership on the mission field! Here was a scandal to earnest disciples. To them Paul could be no apostle, for he taught such latitude. Even Peter stumbled. He saw the Spirit descend upon Samaritan believers. He beheld the vision on the housetop at Joppa. He witnessed the gift of the spirit to a Roman centurion. Still he fell at Antioch when stricter brethren reproached him for eating with Gentile Christians.

The Twentieth Century

Scandal? Yes, but glory too. For God was bringing together a church in which there were no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, but one in which Christ was all, and in all. And the Christian faith was set free from the burden of the Law!

Or consider the factions that developed in the Corinthian church. In that motley company were some who went in for ecstatic experiences in religion. They spoke in tongues and held themselves aloof from the unspiritual brethren who worshiped in less hilarious fashion. But Paul scandalized them by insisting that they were no more spiritual than the more sober disciples. "By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body . . . and all were made to drink of one Spirit."

When well-to-do members of that church came to the Love-Feast, they ate by themselves lest the poorer members gobble up their delicacies. Again Paul scandalized them. It is not the Lord's Supper which you keep, he said, if you divide into factions and do not discern the Lord's body. Is not this insight the answer to the problem of intercommunion? If we commune only with those like ourselves, and withdraw from others, we violate the meaning of the sacrament. Such words are scandalous. But they show forth the glory of the apostolic church.

But let us consider the scandal of the ecumenical fellowship in our day. Denominations which have lived in isolation from one another through all their history are being brought face to face in the ecumenical encounter. How thrilling! Yes, but how shattering to the thoughts we have entertained concerning ourselves. We have, of course, been the true people of God, following the divine pattern. We disavow such a claim if it is put so bluntly, but the assumption is still in our mind. It is distressing to be brought to the knowledge that our communion is only one of many, that most Christians are ill informed about our peculiar virtues, and that they consider our significance something less than epochal. It is even more painful to realize the truth of Oliver Tomkins' words at Lund: "To put the ecumenical paradox . . . brutally, the World Council of Churches is a Council of Denominations, whilst its very creation has destroyed the justification of denominations."

Faith and Order

You see, the meeting of confession with confession in ecumenical encounter, wherever it occurs, is not just a colorful pageant. It is a scandal to the way in which all of us have thought about the church. I recall a dear lady in a women's meeting to which I had spoken about Faith and Order. In the question period she asked, quite earnestly, "But what could we possibly learn from any other communion?" Until our sectarian conceptions are painfully scandalized by the ecumenical fellowship, we cannot begin to conceive the glory of Christ's church.

Or consider the deepest and widest cleavage within American Christianity. It is not the rift between any two denominations, even Protestant and Roman. It is a gulf within our communions, a gulf without theological justification, the gulf between black Christians and white Christians. World fellowship is thrilling at a convention if it means different people wearing costumes and singing in strange languages. But when it comes to a serious proposal for eliminating segregation in a local church, it is a scandal.

Many people who have listened to the story of great conferences like Oxford or Madras or Amsterdam or Lund long for an ecumenical experience. It could be had in thousands of American communities without having to settle one theological problem. Just let the Christians of different races, already in the same denomination, learn how to receive one another in Christian fellowship. We shall have to be scandalized by churches without racial qualifications for membership before we can know the fulness of those words, truly ecumenical, "As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Political Tensions

Again, look at the most serious threat to the unity of Christendom in our time. It is the tension between the two great power blocs of the modern world, East and West. Communist dictators have rung down the iron curtain across the fellowship

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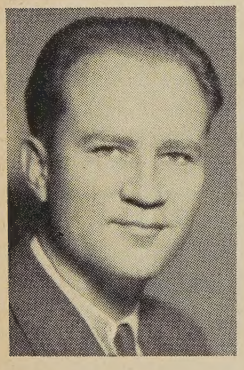
of the world church. They have set one part of the body of Christ against another. In Russia itself the greatest damage has been done. It is not uncommon there for high ecclesiastics to denounce the World Council and the churches of the West as degenerate tools of the wicked capitalists. In other regions suspicion grows. Our deepest gratitude is due to those heroic Christians in East Germany who, at the risk of their lives, are maintaining the bonds uniting their churches in fellowship with those beyond their guarded borders.

But how is it with us? Are we ready to honor the faith and sincerity of our Christian brethren in Communist-dominated lands? Some of them, after earnest prayer, have decided to accept the regime under which they live, to bear their witness as obedient citizens under a Red government. Are we willing to respect their decision? Or is the only function we can conceive for a church behind the iron curtain that of a politico-military unit in an underground resistance movement?

Here is a first-rate scandal in the making. For next August the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches is to meet at Evanston, Ill. To that meeting, among others, will come Christians from behind the iron curtain, if the Communists will let them out—and if we will let them in! They will not be champions of Americanism or of capitalism. They may be friendly defenders, if not ardent advocates, of the system under which they live. Some of our newspapers will play that up. They will present the World Council as a Communist front. And many will be scandalized. Yet in this scandal God will be revealing to us the true nature of the church. For it has existed under the Roman Empire, under feudalism, under absolute monarchies, under Nazism, under communism, and in democratic societies.

Always the church has taken on some coloration from the order in which it lived, but it has also brought God's judgment upon that order and his salvation to men within it. So in the Assembly at Evanston, scandalous as it will be to some, we may see demonstrated the glory of the church, whose members our Lord has ransomed for God "from every tribe and tongue and people and nation" and "has made a kingdom and priests to our God."

Surely, "the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."



Preparing for Evanston

Faith and Order

By L. Humphrey Walz

John 17:1, 6, 9, 21.

THE hour was late. Jesus must soon be treading the lonely path from betrayal in the Garden of Gethsemane to execution on Calvary's hilltop. If his purpose of winning all mankind into the fellowship of the family of the Father was to advance, the disciples must be prepared to carry a heavier share of the responsibility. Yet even now they were showing those signs of doubt and fear which would scatter them as the crisis drew nearer. Despite his long and intimate labors to teach, show and inspire them, they could not be depended on . . . unless . . . unless . . .

It was under these circumstances that Jesus prayed that they might have a faith that was more than just the passing acceptance of beliefs, however true. It must consist of a relationship with God through Christ so vital that it would bring them together again into a solidarity of belonging such as the world had never seen before. And this fellowship must be so real that those who beheld them from without must want to know more of the faith which produced it from within.

Whenever we see the words Faith and Order side by side with capitalized initials we must remember that prayer and that setting. Order means many things to many people, but here it has one meaning only: the effective, outward expression of an underlying fellowship born of genuine faith in God through Christ.

Expression of Fellowship

Sometimes that Order consists of spontaneous Christian teamwork such as springs into being to bring quick aid to victims of sudden disaster. In a steadier and—we could wish—more obvious way we see it reflected within phases of the life of almost every congregation. It may be recognized in its simplicity in the life of a Christian family together and apart. The organizational complexities of the World Council of Churches and Church World Service are struggling expressions of it on a global scale.

L. HUMPHREY WALZ, a Presbyterian member of the communications advisory committee for the World Council of Churches' General Assembly at Evanston, brings this sermon on the first of the six sub-topics under the broad Assembly theme: "Christ the Hope of the World."

Faith's reality is recognized by its promptings toward ever greater Order. It opens our eyes, as the Lund Report puts it, "to the depth and pain of our separations and also to our fundamental unity." It prods us both to the penitence and to the appreciation whereby the separations are reduced and the unity increased. It enables us therefore to play a personal part in the fulfillment of the objective of the great world conferences on Faith and Order: by our oneness in Christ to overcome our disunity as churches.

Penitence has been mentioned. Note the mood in the World Council's prayer for the 1954 Evanston Assembly: "We have failed to give ourselves only to thee, and have brought weakness upon the church. Renew in us a right mind, O Father, that there may be new life and power in thy church unto thy glory." Such penitence, whether it comes with tears or with laughter, always strikes hard at those barriers which we have erected between ourselves and a more inclusive Christian fellowship.

A favorite story of the Very Rev. James Hutchison Cockburn points this up as it takes us back to a turbulent scene in the 1920s. Dr. Cockburn, now best known as senior Scottish chaplain to Elizabeth II, was then an accredited observer from the Church of Scotland attending the General Assembly of the Scottish Free Church as it considered the proposal to merge with his denomination.

Faith in Action

Opposition was strong and ably led by James Barr, who made an impassioned speech detailing an astounding list of the defects and historical mistakes of the Church of Scotland. The degree to which his viewpoint was shared was formidably indicated by loud and long applause.

As the tumult subsided, Professor Iverach of Aberdeen quietly rose and commented that Dr. Barr's speech reminded him of a farmer he knew who, riding home from market, found an ordinarily shallow stream had been swollen by a cloudburst to a dangerous torrent. Through its swirling currents he urged his mare, and with great difficulty they reached the other bank. Some weeks later, the farmer was surprised that his mount refused to cross the stream, though it was again shallow. He prodded her and tried to lead her, but all in vain. She refused to budge. Thoroughly frustrated, he looked her in the eye and sighed, "Maggie! Maggie! I think mair-r o' your-r memor-ry than your-r judgment!"

"The laughter," reports Dr. Cockburn reminiscently, "was gargantuan and the applause long-continued; and during it I seemed to hear the votes clicking over from the opposition, and I could be confident that the union was assured."

The delegates' ability to laugh at themselves for having disguised their stubbornness under virtuous labels, to applaud their corrector and not only stand corrected but also translate the correction into corrective action, was an indication of Christian penitence of the highest rank! It showed Faith at work eliminating obstacles to unity and making way for a more effective Order.

Beyond this, however, true faith demands an appreciation of the differing viewpoints sincerely held by our fellow Christians. In doing so, it points us beneath certain surface differences to the discovery of convictions strikingly like our own. In other instances it reveals genuine values which we need as supplements to make up for our own lacks. When it is we who are right and others wrong, Christian faith directs us gratefully and tactfully to share the insights we possess. And in many another way—in prayer, study or action, separately or together—it brings us closer to the fulfillment of the prayer "that they may all be one."

Order Helps to Express Faith

Nor does it stop there. Order is born of Faith, but Order also gives Faith a magnetism to win others to it. And the rest of Christ's prayer, "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me," finds the beginning of its answer.

This was seen in the 1st century when the early Christians continued daily with one accord to work, share, worship and eat together with gladness and singleness of heart, and "the Lord added to the church daily." Again, in the 2nd century, pagan leaders became Christian followers after observing, "Behold these Christians, how they love one another!"

In the 20th century the same truths hold. Not only are the great ecumenical conferences, assemblies and movements, despite their human failings, making their impressions on the world, but also, Faith is producing instances of the harmonious, loving Order that makes doubters and outsiders want to believe and belong.

Shortly after the close of World War II, a Lutheran clergyman, en route from a port city to his home in Buffalo, entered a dining car and was seated opposite another man at a table for two. He was wearing no clerical garb, so his dinner companion was uninhibited in the profanity with which he cynically commented on everything from the state of the roadbed to the "mess in Washington." At that point a shabbily dressed couple appeared at the head of the corridor with their eight children. The steward led them down the aisle and seated them at one table for two and two tables for four.

Bowed Heads

The cynic took the occasion to complain bitterly about more foreigners coming over to take American jobs and bringing with them so many extra mouths for Uncle Sam to feed. But the minister found himself turning around as he heard the little gasps of excitement from the children as Papa translated line after line of the menu with the aid of a pocket Dutch-English lexicon. Finally they gave their order and watched eagerly for the return of the waiters with their trays holding ten plates, on each of which were two eggs, fried, sunny-side-up. The eyes of the parents grew misty with memories of home before the Nazis came; the

children could not have been more delighted if round lumps of gold set in mother-of-pearl had been placed before them. Yet not one made a move to eat as they all turned toward Papa and bowed their heads.

All the passengers were watching by the time Papa offered a quiet but audible prayer. They could not understand his words but they could sense his vibrant gratitude to the God from whom flow all blessings—including eggs, fried, sunny-side-up. The same was true when Mama, and then each of the youngsters, prayed briefly, and all added their Amen together. Now that it was time to eat, they savored each forkful happily and chatted gaily among themselves.

Our Witness to the World

The minister turned to his companion in the hope that somehow he might modify the latter's prejudice and relieve his bitterness. But the cynic spoke first, stammering out words whose profanity was somehow changed by his emotion-choked effort into a benediction: "D-damn it all! God b-bless 'em!"

The little group never suspected that they were prompting a first faltering step onto the Christian pathway. Just so, while it is not always obvious even to the faithful, it is nonetheless true that, where Faith has produced that harmony we have called Order, those in the outside world find themselves beginning to grope toward the Christ whom the Father has sent to be the Hope of the World.

AUTHOR'S FOOTNOTE: The above sermon no more than suggests the basis of the Faith and Order movement. To understand its historical setting, present development and future trends, study is advised of the materials listed below and arranged in order from the simplest to the most detailed. All are available from the World Council of Churches, 156 Fifth Ave., New York 10, N. Y. A detailed list of recommended materials for *all* of the Evanston topics may be secured without charge from the Council.

Search the Scriptures, Bible bookmark with prayer and relevant Scripture; free.

Ecumenical Studies: No. 1 Faith and Order, to stimulate church group discussion; 12 pp., 5 cents.

Exploring Paths of Church Unity helped prepare discussion groups before the Lund 1952 World Conference on Faith and Order and is still timely; by James W. Kennedy; 64 pp., 35 cents.

He That Gathereth, a summary of the Lund Conference with indications of areas where further progress is needed and suggestions as to how local groups can help; by James W. Kennedy; 112 pp., 35 cents.

More than Doctrine Divides the Churches, an important, frank, friendly discussion of non-theological factors that keep Christians apart; by Dodd, Cragg and Ellul; 35 pp., 25 cents.

Ecumenical Review, Oct., 1953, covers the work of the several commissions preparing for the 1954 Evanston General Assembly of the World Council of Churches; K. E. Skydsgaard devotes 9 pages to the Faith and Order Commission's work; 50 cents.

Faith and Order: The Report of the Lund Conference, 1952; full official volume, 384 pp., $3.00; abbreviated booklet, 62 pp., 25 cents.

A New Year's Sermon

What Do You Live For?

By Donald Macleod

For to me to live is Christ. Philippians 1:21.

HENRY DRUMMOND, saintly Scottish scientist and religious thinker of the 19th century, once remarked, "The true discovery of a character is the discovery of what he lives for."

The other evening I received a phone call from a young college girl who asked if she could see me. During the interview she came quickly to the point. Her problem was: What shall I do with my life? I did not answer this until I put to her a question: What goal do you have in mind? She replied: "I want, first of all, financial security; and second, a long vacation in order to be free to travel."

What has come over this generation of strong, brilliant, and well equipped young men and women who, as they face the challenge of tomorrow, are not concerned about their value to society, but whose first question to a prospective employer is, "What is your pension plan and when do I retire?"

How alarming and disillusioning it is to discover how this attitude of irresponsibility and indifference towards the higher claims of life has taken hold of men and women and has left a host of stunted personalities in its train! Our civilization is crammed with costly furniture and gadgets and chattels, yet most people are heartily sick of it all. We have gone all out for science and techniques and speed, yet our unhappiness has increased out of all proportion to these advantages. Our times are fat and prosperous and swollen, yet we have no answers to such tantalizing questions as: What is the reason for our existence? What is the meaning of life? What really do we

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live for? So much of our attitude to the world and life is typified in a cartoon, which Frederick Meek tells about. It depicts a young man and his fiancée making the inevitable announcement to her father. To a discreet question from the latter, the prospective son-in-law retorts, "I make a hundred and fifty bucks a week! What do you care whether I got character?"

A New Power

So we have thought and lived until the whole of life has become banal, insipid and one gruelling round of sheer frustration. Even a hurried glimpse behind the façade of our countless social activities gives us a terrifying picture of life without religion, of boredoom and despair that drive people into every extravagance, of a feverish search for some excitement to occupy every waking hour of the day, and the use of every device simply to relieve us of the responsibility of thinking. We are so very like the man in Glasgow, about whom Dr. Gossip tells, who had come through twenty long years of running away from life, and who said, "It was the mornings, the terrible mornings, when one cried out 'O God, have I another whole long day of it to face so soon!' "

But what if something were to come into life to change its ugly and misshapen patterns and make everything altogether different? When Wilfred Grenfell came to his old age, he said, "Today, at well over 70 years, I am just as keen for life as ever I was. Life has taught me that I can be of worth to God." What is the secret of a life such as that? It is simply to have something for which to live! St. Paul said, "For to me to live is Christ." And though the centuries separate Paul from us, yet through the years the men and women who have enriched the world and life have been those who have claimed Christ as their ideal and brought all their aims and ends and purposes under allegiance to him. The quality of what they did and what they were was in direct proportion to the height and grandeur of their inner ideal.

But, someone interrupts, how does this thing work? What evidence or change, if any, could one expect to see in an individual who professes sincerely, "For to me to live is Christ"?

Man of the Hour

Imagine, for instance, this young man, Saul, the product of the choicest theological school of his day, with a brilliant academic career to his credit, with all his tutored talents and canny intellect poised for action, as he hit upon the world of his time with a frenzied eagerness to become great. He saw his chance by becoming the stormy investigator to seek out and destroy a persistent little sect called Christians. To the Jews he was indeed the man of the hour, and with a flourish of initial success he poured out his stinging wrath upon the followers of the Nazarene who were in Jerusalem. The little band scattered temporarily, but Saul's anger was kindled to white heat when he heard the sect was breaking out in various parts of Judea and Samaria and among the cities of the north. So, with his bristling entourage, he strode along the Damascus road where suddenly he was arrested by a blinding light and a voice that asked, "Why do you persecute me?"

Like the effect of a staggering revelation, Saul saw that in God's order, he did not count, and that under the tyranny of selfish honor his was merely a cheap reputation that would not stand the proof of time or thought. Out of this maelstrom of conflicting aims and thoughts and passions, this Jew, whose standard had been "For to me to live is *Saul,*" became Paul, the ambassador of the cross, who said, "For to me to live is *Christ.*" Think of the depth of meaning in these words! Not merely in his own judgment, "for me to live"; but *in his case,* "for to me to live is Christ." This was the thought of F. W. H. Myers in his poem entitled "St. Paul":

> Yea, through life, death, through sorrow and through sinning,
> He shall suffice me, for He hath sufficed;
> Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,
> Christ the beginning for the end is Christ.

From Self to Christ

Oh, but you say, that was Paul. What can all this mean to a blind, stumbling, fear-haunted generation such as ours? It can—yea, must—mean everything; and until it does, you and I and all we hold precious are in constant jeopardy. "For to me to live is Christ" means that your life is genuine only as it is devoted to, shaped after, vitalized by, and spent in communion with Christ.

I. *Those words mean that life has a new center.*

"For to me to live is" *in* Christ. Did not Paul say to the Corinthian church, "If any man be *in Christ,* he is a new creation"?

Do you remember Maggie Tulliver in George Eliot's novel *The Mill on the Floss?* Maggie was proud and had lofty dreams for herself, but her father went bankrupt and landed them all in shameful poverty. In utter frustration Maggie paced her room and felt like a soaring bird slamming its wings against the bars of its cage. Then she picked up a copy of *The Imitation of Christ,* by the saintly Thomas à Kempis and read this line: "Know that the love of self doth hurt thee more than anything in the world." And George Eliot added, "It flashed upon Maggie Tulliver that all the miseries of her young life had come from fixing her heart on her own pleasure, as if that were the central necessity of the universe."

Unity Through Christ

Men and women, at this beginning of another year, take a look into your life—not at its periphery, but into its very heart—and ask yourselves, Is it *Christ?* Or is it *self?* If it is self, you are living according to a mean and sorry program under the tyranny of prejudice, vanity and pretension. As Dr. Maltby put it, "The soul that is self-centered is at war with God." But if Christ is at the center—what then? Few have an answer so fitting as John Cairns:

The unity which the soul of man receives through Christ is as great a proof of adaptation and design as anything in the outer world. The heart of man needs something to engross it, an object on which it can concentrate all its affections without self-reproach, and which by its admitted sway brings unity into its existence, and concord in all its purposes and aspirations. Now as Christ has fulfilled this end in time, so shall he yet more by his pre-eminence fulfill it to endless ages.

II. *These words mean that life has a new pattern.*

"For to me to live is" *for* Christ. Did not Paul suggest a pattern when he said, "Now then are we ambassadors for Christ"?

Surely, if anything is our problem, it is this: a new pattern for living. There is the communist; he vows he has a pattern. But if his pattern were imposed generally upon our common life, do you think for one moment that morally it would save or transform the world? Would the pattern of fascism do any better?

A New Pattern

Paul talked about a different pattern—"For to me to live is Christ"—and it was no man-made system he had in mind. Paul had reference to a new state of being which was prefaced by a personal relationship wherein all he thought and said and did were under the aegis of Christ's spirit. This does not mean that life for Paul—or even for any believing Christian since—was set up in neat chapters like a Horatio Alger story in which everything turns out nicely in the end. It means living out 100 per cent what Christ expects of you. You are his, and as he gave himself, so must you give yourselves, holding absolutely nothing back.

Such was Christ's pattern for Paul. As James S. Stewart puts it, "Paul met his destiny at Damascus, and it beggared and ruined his earthly prospects, led him to stoning, shipwreck, imprisonment, death." And such is Christ's pattern for us. It reaches, moreover, its sublimest height when its pattern becomes a cross and, with Paul, each of us can say, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

III. *These words mean that life can have victory.*

"For to me to live is" not only *in* Christ, and *for* Christ, but also *through* Christ. Did not Paul refer with joy and satisfaction to our "victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"? H. H. Farmer said, "God's victories are won only on the battlefields of human hearts." This is exactly where life's fiercest and intensest struggle is being waged today. Everyone is involved. No one can win alone. But if Christ be the very life of our life, we have a mighty resource in our soul, because we share a moral victory that good wrought against evil upon the neutral timber of the cross. The joy of it all is that when we are caught in the doubt and fear and stumbling of our times, we can still look into the face of the risen, sovereign Lord and catch the radiance of his victory.

Remember Ian MacLaren's story about the old country doctor in Drumtochty. One day when the doctor was calling in the distant glen, a lad on the Burnbrae farm was caught and maimed in the cruel knives of the threshing mill. While the good folk stood helplessly by, watching the boy's strength ebb away, they wondered if the old doctor, who was the keeper of their physical lives, would arrive in time to avert disaster. Suddenly they heard his horse's hoof beats and with them anxiety fell from their hearts. And later Jamie Souter said, "It was mighty to see him come into the yard that day, neighbors; the very look of him was victory!"

Time to Help Others

A Sermon for Children by Ralph Conover Lankler

First Presbyterian, Cortland, N. Y.

THE bus was crowded, people were standing in the aisle. Everyone was restless and in a hurry, but not the driver. As he drove along, he stopped slowly and he visited with the passengers he picked up and discharged. This irritated some of the people who thought that he ought to hurry.

They were doubly disturbed when the driver stopped the bus in front of a house and called to a little boy who was playing in the yard.

The boy came running over to the bus saying, "What do you want?"

"Did you leave something in my bus yesterday?"

The boy didn't seem to remember and was about to say "no" when the driver said: "O yes you did. You left your school books, you little cabbage head." He gave the books to the boy, who smiled a "thank-you," and then the bus was on its way. Much to everyone's surprise it arrived at the bus station a few minutes ahead of schedule.

It was a different group of people who rode on after the visit with the boy. They forgot that they were tired, hot or in a hurry. They smiled and felt better because they had seen the best part of human nature revealed and a little boy made happy.

The thought occurred to them that there is something more important in life than being in a hurry. It is more necessary to be thoughtful, kind and helpful. It doesn't cost anything to be kind except a little effort and a little time. We miss a great deal of fun and pleasure in life by always being in such a rush that we cannot stop to help others, to say "please" or "thank you" or to cheer up those who are traveling with us through life.

When False Gods Go

By Perry Epler Gresham

Paul . . . said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious." Acts 17:22.

MARS HILL was the context for the memorable sermon preached by that intrepid missionary-statesman, the Apostle Paul. If Peter was "the heart" of the apostolic church, Paul was "the mind." The Atheneans were assembled to hear something new. The eager and yearning attitude prerequisite to great preaching was absent. Kierkegaard once said, "When we go to church we think of ourselves as the judges with the preacher as the actor. But when we go to church, we are the actors; God is the judge. The preacher merely prompts now and again." The men of the Areopagus Society thought they were the judges. Paul was confronted with the necessity of a startling introduction. He was equal to the challenge: "You are entirely too religious."

The same smashing sentence could begin a sermon to our modern age. We are entirely too religious—but about the wrong things! We have fallen into the worship of false gods. Paul gave his congregation a bill of particulars. He pointed out the gods they were worshiping in a nominal manner by lifting statues, monuments and images to the various deities honored in their classic culture. Here were the traditional figures of their pantheon. Present were the seasons, the arts, the muses, even the venerable Zeus. Lest one be overlooked, there stood a statue to an unknown god. The Athenians were in the mood of the Scotsman who on his deathbed was asked by his pastor to renounce the devil. He answered, "In my condition I can't afford to offend anybody!" The god honored casually as an unknown residue was identified by Paul as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—Creator, Sustainer of the Universe and the Redeemer of mankind.

New Idolatries

This audacious sermon rings grandly in our ears. We too have worshiped idols while professing a casual and nominal regard for the God of the Universe who reveals himself to us through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our idolatries have taken a new turn. Reflection on the changing seasons and the recurrent fates with the speculative dualism of being and becoming leaves us unmoved. The cyclical view of history which charmed the ancient pagan world is theoretical and academic in our culture except for a coterie of scholars who live in the classic realm of speculative inquiry. Our idolatries are active rather than passive.

The suffix "ism" indicates a cult attitude toward any object. Materialism is the tacit religion of multitudes today. We worship money. Nobody would deliberately replace the cross with a dollar sign as the central symbol in a cathedral, but our lives tell a story of devotion to wealth which approaches fanaticism. There are too many men who spend the first half of their lives trying to get rich and the last half trying to get well. We use a dollar policy in an effort to buy good will on the foreign market. We make financial security the great goal toward which our efforts are oriented. To be sure, our experience with financial insecurity explains our struggle for profits, increased wages or government welfare supports. Professor Kraemer of Western Reserve School of Business quipped: "The scripture of the contemporary farm block is 'Now abideth faith, hope, and parity, but the greatest of these is parity.' "

Modern Gods

The ghastly pain of the depression and the uncertainty of the war with its "cold war" consequences have left us sensitive to the contingent nature of our human predicament. Greed is our response. We want profits without producing, wages without working and fees without commensurate services. Many professional groups are uneasy lest the dollar regard on the part of some of their craft should threaten the noble tradition of devotion to patients, clients or parishioners.

Emerson described us when he said, "Things are in the saddle, and ride mankind." Our gadget culture has given us comfort, but not righteousness. The frequent phrase, "the American way of life," too often means comfort rather than creative democratic adventure. The rivers give power to burn toast, curl hair, wash dishes and run errands. The earth yields coal, gas and oil until the average American has the equivalent of 129 slaves at his command. Yet one must ask if the quality of life expressed in reason and morality is superior to that of the ancients of Israel who were at ease in Zion but sold the needy for a pair of shoes.

PERRY EPLER GRESHAM was installed last October as president of Bethany College, Bethany, W. Va., one of the oldest colleges of the Disciples of Christ. Formerly minister of Central Woodward Christian Church in Detroit, he preached this sermon before the Chicago Sunday Evening Club.

Trust in military might as the principal factor in world security is only one more indication of our perverse values. We spend as much in one day for past, present and future wars as we have spent on the missionary movement since the day of Pentecost. We send armies to defeat a foe in the field with apparent disregard of the patent fact that only as we out-live, out-think, out-love and out-die our enemies can we establish law, justice and morality. We are in the tradition of the Chinese emperor who built a military wall and burned the libraries.

More False Gods

America is justly proud of her technological achievements. In 1948 we produced 43 per cent of the world's economic income with only 6 per cent of the world's population. When devoted to the service of man as an aid to happy homes and human betterment, wealth and material might are worthy values. They are aids to living but not ends in themselves. "A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." Money is good, but the love of it is the root of all evil. It is the high doctrine of Christianity that God owns all wealth. We are his trustees and managers. When we put our trust in wealth we are like the rich fool who heard the terrifying declaration: "This night your soul is required of you."

The dominant religion in our times is humanism. Devotion to the creature rather than the Creator is idolatry. While denouncing the avowed worship of man, we tacitly practice it. We live for our egos, our families, our gangs and our government rather than living as children of our God and Father. Ego worship is expressed in our Promethean striving for success. Bertrand Russell once said something to this effect, "Most men would be God if they could, a few have been unable to admit the impossibility." We fall frustrate into mental institutions or commit suicide as did Willy Lohman in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman.* Ambition outruns its function until we envy our neighbors or scourge ourselves for our failures. The go-getter obsession robs us of tranquility and meaning in the art of life. The sin of ambition is the worship of one's self. An egocentric no more thinks of himself as selfish than does a pig think of himself as greedy. We are too religious, for our god is ego.

Contemporary Religions

Tribalism is a contemporary practice rather than merely a stage in primitive history. Parents sentence their children to the tragic death of being hanged by apron strings. Adolescents have a right to rebel. The mark of maturity is ability to be free under God to manage one's own life. Yet the idolatry of the child may leave him unable to make intelligent decisions. Distortion of a child's abilities may cause serious inner crises in the difficult and inevitable time of readjustment. Children are in the custody of parents for love, nurture and guidance into maturity. They are not objects of worship nor instruments for self aggrandizement. When a self-centered father took his son to a college dean with the instruction, "Help him to develop into a man like me," the wise dean answered, "Don't you agree that one like you is enough?"

Nationalism is the strange new religion of modern multitudes. In Yugoslavia at least it has triumphed over the fanatical faith of international communism. Nation worship is more compelling than state worship and is therefore more dangerous. It is the idolatry of the total complex of affairs including history, geography, heroes, armies, flags, legends, and the pride which protests innocence approaching sanctity. Jingoism is its crudest expression, but its subtler forms appear in treaties, tariffs, exclusion acts and the diatribes of propaganda.

Communism is the greatest new humanistic idolatry of the contemporary world. As Arnold Toynbee traveled with me on the eastbound Empress of France, he offered the opinion that the struggle of East and West is the massive mountain range of significance in the current centuries. The religion of communism is a combination of materialism, nationalism, statism and atheism. It is based on the assumption that collective man and economic history are an invincible team. In final analysis it is the idolatry of power and idea.

Idealistic false gods threaten us. We are too religious in our scientism. Naive indeed is the assumption that man can correct his immorality by psychiatry and his violence by additional knowledge. We tremble at the daybreak of atomic

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Silver Dollar

A Sermon for Children

By Carlton Van Ornum

First Methodist Church, Camden, N. Y.

SOME time ago an old minister told me a true story from the early days of his own life. Back in the days when his father worked many long hours to make a dollar the young boy learned a great lesson. The county fair was open, and he had been teasing his father for money to go to it. Finally, his father went into the kitchen and took down the old coffee can of savings from off the shelf. Selecting one of the few silver dollars in the can, his father held it out toward his son. As the eager boy reached for the shining silver dollar the father's big, calloused hand closed over his. "Son, there is one thing I want you to remember as you spend this silver dollar. Think of the long, hard hours your father has labored in order to save it. *When you spend it remember you are spending a part of your father's life.*" The young boy spent that silver dollar with a great deal of care.

When our fathers give us money to spend let us remember that we need to be good stewards of it as we are spending a part of their lives. When our Heavenly Father gives us material blessings let us remember to be good stewards of his gifts.

Are We Afraid of Freedom?

By Gene E. Bartlett

In their hearts they turned to Egypt. Acts 7:39.

ONE of my boyhood memories is of the days in the Ohio valley when we fought the rising floods. One such recollection is particularly vivid. The river, swollen by the spring thaw, was pushing up into our city. Volunteers from almost every area of the community's life were working feverishly to build dikes of sandbags and other material to stem the tide. It seemed that no matter how hard we worked the water kept rising. Hour by hour the question was whether the water would rise to a height which would finally break through our walls and inundate the community. I shall never forget that morning when, after long hours of work, we became aware that at last the water had reached its crest. The point of reversal had come. From this time on the water would recede.

This picture comes to mind often these days as we seek to understand the crises with which we are confronted. Most of the freedoms which we enjoy are being threatened by rising tides of opposition and suspicion. What distinctive function has the Christian church at this moment in the struggle to preserve our cherished democratic freedoms?

Fear of Insecurity

Demosthenes defined the functions of a statesman in these words: "To discern events and their beginnings, to be beforehand in the detection of movements and tendencies and to forewarn his countrymen accordingly; to fight against the political vice from which no state is free, against procrastination, ignorance and jealousy, and to impress upon all the paramount importance of unity and free thinking." This is not only a definition of a statesman; it is in part a description of the function of the Christian pulpit in a time like this.

The setting for our thought is found in a fragment of the sermon of Stephen. Describing the renunciation of the covenant by the Hebrew people, he tells of their being overcome by fear just as they stood on the border of Canaan. "In their hearts they turned to Egypt." That was the testing point. They were standing on the threshold of a Promised Land when there came the terrible crisis of fear. Egypt, the home of tyranny! Egypt, the land from which they had wanted so much to be free! But in the time of fear and insecurity, even Egypt looked better than danger. Once the danger had been that Pharoah might overtake them and force them to return. Not so now! What Pharoah could not do, fear was about to achieve. They were going back, not by coercion but by choice!

Inner Uncertainties

The whole story is a vivid one. Moses had led the people out of Egypt as he was commissioned to do, and after long struggle they came to the place where they could send scouts on to the Promised Land. The scouts came back with the report that the land indeed was fruitful and beautiful. But also the inhabitants were strong and men of great stature. Beside them the Israelites felt like grasshoppers. Some were not afraid. They wanted to move on in. But others who had gone in became afraid. "So they brought to the people of Israel an evil report of the land." They pictured its dangers. Then it was that the people of Israel began to say, "Would it not be better for us to go to Egypt?"

What a familiar crisis this is in history! One rarely reads a story of great advance without finding in it at some point this crisis of fear; some time at which fear and faith confront each other for the final showdown, the hour at which they either will turn back or go on. That final testing is in men's souls; it is spiritual, the crisis of fear! It comes to any people committed to freedom. Because I believe we are at that point in our American democracy, I ask you to consider several aspects of the ministry of the Christian church to our nation today.

In the first place, *we of the church must be honest in admitting that in part the problem is really in us, not outside.* It is not easy to accept this diagnosis, for the most ready answer is that the size of our fear is determined by the size of the realities feared. The crisis, we conclude, is not within us as much as it is outside us.

Yet, the insight of this verse seems to be a valid

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one: "*In their hearts* they turned to Egypt." There had been a time when they never would have considered returning to Egypt by their own choice. The temptation now was that by fear they should return of their own volition, knocking at the very gates from which they had fled, asking to be taken back by choice because there it was more secure. They had become afraid of their freedom.

Unhealthy Fear

It is with measured and deliberate thought that I profess the belief that our problem is fear which is disproportionate to the reality. We are terribly afraid of communism. Hence our investigations which easily become intimidations. We are prone to label any differences of thought subversive. We *have* become afraid of freedom!

Perhaps the nearest parallel is in the way fear can bless or blight a human life. There is, for example, a normal fear of disease. This is necessary for the maintenance of health. It enables one to take the normal precautions and to observe the necessary rules for health. But when that fear becomes disproportionate and increasingly demanding, then it becomes not a protector but a new problem. Fear which was given us for our own good, when it runs wild, can become a disease in itself.

The same thing can happen within a nation. Any mature people will observe the normal precautions to protect their freedom, but when this becomes their dominant concern to the point of panic, fear which ought to protect has become in itself a threat. In fact, freedom *is* the only real protection.

Right to Nonconformity

The ease with which investigations exert subtle but real repressions on the freedom of the press, the pulpit or our academic leaders is ample reminder that we need to keep especially steady hands and calm heads in these days of stress. Recent attacks upon the church are simply the logical unfolding of fear at work. They will go on to challenge our right to differentness, even on Christian grounds. One could foresee what was coming when the investigations of universities began. Confusion, misunderstanding and tension have been injected into the thinking of many concerned and deeply committed people. Herbert A. Philbrick, who worked with the Communist organization as an agent of the FBI and who also is an active churchman, says:

> First and most important, don't go misunderstanding every minister, rabbi and priest in the land. Don't go looking for Communists under every pulpit. Moreover, we must not mistake religious individualism for subersive activity. . . . The freedoms that we enjoy today—what are they but the fruits of our lively and liberal Protestant heritage? The fearless championing of such freedoms must not be abandoned.

In the second place, *we of the Christian churches have the obligation to stand firmly for the right of nonconformity.* How deep that runs in our tradition! From the time those three traditional characters, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, refused to conform even in a fiery furnace on down to the present time, we have a great tradition of dissent and nonconformity. It can be said without any fear of dispute that we would not be here today worshiping freely if it had not been for this tradition. We never would have had the Bible translated into a language understood by the people if it had not been for great dissenters who made it possible. We would not be enjoying the freedom of conscience to worship God as we will if it had not been for Martin Luther who answered his accusers, "My conscience is lashed to the word of God, and it is neither safe nor honest to act against one's conscience. God help me! Amen."

Days of Stress

The point of our real testing is whether we have the courage to allow thinking that does not altogether conform. It is the question as to whether we believe in freedom enough to allow viewpoints to be heard which seem to us radical. Our Protestant tradition must be affirmed. Even at the heat of the Reformation, Farel invited Catholic priests to Lausanne to debate the ten Evangelical *Theses.* He said: "You may speak here as boldly as you please; our arguments are neither fagot, fire nor sword, prison nor torture; public executioners are not our doctors of divinity. . . . Truth is strong enough to outweigh falsehood; if you have it, bring it forward."

The fundamental belief of our democracy is the ability of people to make a sound judgment when they have heard all sides of a question, the con-

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Certainty

By William H. Littleton

Mulberry Street Methodist, Macon, Ga.

A WINTRY wind is loose throughout the earth;
Through every land, o'er every sea, its chill
Is piercing human hearts, destroying mirth,
Engulfing hope, and threatening to still
The onward surge of mankind's lofty dream.
What promise holds the morrow, save to fill
The restless destiny of this day's theme?
Wind-swept by cold uncertainty, I stand
And cry to God for yet one solid beam,
Unmoved and firm amid life's shifting sand.

A voice returns that whispers from the past,
In tones of calm assurance lifted o'er
The rumbling wind, heard through the icy blast,
" 'The Father sits enthroned forevermore';
And in that certainty is all thy stay,
And all thou needest." Though the tumult roar,
My soul, no longer captive of its sway,
Finds now response in Him whose might is sure,
Whose presence permeates the darkened way,
And bids the fainting wanderer endure.

Bird in the Bush

By Dewey R. Eder

By faith Abraham obeyed . . . and he went out, not knowing where he was to go. Hebrews 11:8.

IN his autobiography, *My Island Home,* James Norman Hall tells of an experience shortly before his graduation from Grinnell College. It was dusk and he was lying on the campus green watching the stars appear. Without seeing him, two of his professors soon sat down on a bench on the other side of the bushes. They began to talk about him and the consternation which his habit of nonconformity had caused the faculty. Finally, one of them attempted to sum up the long-range purpose of a liberal arts college by saying: "It is our business to teach young men and women that the bird in the bush is worth two in the hand." For days this puzzled him, but when commencement came he had decided to give himself to pursuit of the bird in the bush. Like Abraham he went out "not knowing where he was to go."

Our age is obsessed with the idea of security. We believe that a bird in the hand is worth a half dozen in the bush! Our national aim is to achieve military security. Many people covet nothing so much for themselves as economic security, not only for old age but the sooner the better. And the experts are sure that if our children are to have sound personalities they must never know anything but psychological security.

Dove of Peace

When we stop to think of it, the bird in the bush is always more important than the one in the hand. In fact, only as someone lets loose of his security does mankind make progress. Here is a profound principle which runs through all life. Jesus put it this way: "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." He also warned that only he who lets loose of life will really find it.

Despite the military power which we have amassed in recent years, our nation is today biting its collective fingernails for fear we might not be the equal of our enemies if war came. The fact is we are attempting to achieve a security which many agree is an illusion. There is no sure defense against the armadas of the sky. And all the time, as President Eisenhower said recently, "Mankind is crushed beneath 'a cross of iron.'"

Only a dramatic but sincere gesture by some nation will set mankind free from this vicious circle of armaments. Out of the wide knowledge of his travels in Asia, Justice William O. Douglas of the Supreme Court contends that we should be spending far less to scare the communists and still more to combat the poverty on which communism thrives.

Risks of Faith

Frederick L. Schuman, professor of international law at Williams College, believes that "Americans have been conditioned by their leaders to regard any arrangement offering less than 100 per cent security as worse than no arrangement at all." He holds that a treaty not to use atomic weapons, save in retaliation, would promise a degree of security which, though small, would yet be above zero. Of the same mind are the twelve Columbia University physicists, several of them prominent in the development of the A-bomb, who call for a solemn declaration by the United States that we will never be guilty of using the bomb first. Only by some master strokes of imagination and faith, involving some risks to be sure, is there any hope that our world can lay hold of that illusive bird in the bush, the dove of peace.

Even a fragmentary knowledge of the history of Christianity is enough to teach us that the church rises or falls as it takes the risks of faith. It is said that when the five hundred or more delegates at Nicaea gathered for the first general council of the Christian church in 325 A.D., only five among them bore no physical scars of the sufferings which they had endured.

Kenneth Scott Latourette says that during the great century of achievement between 1830-1930, 75,000 missionaries went out from Europe and North America to the ends of the earth. The fact that 10,000 of them died and 20,000 of them returned broken in health indicates the risks this peaceful army took. Most of them let loose of a bird in the hand—the security of home, the income from a good position, inherited financial resources, even health—to be obedient to the heavenly vision.

There is great encouragement for Christians everywhere in the ecumenical movement. Denominations have been cautious about letting loose of too much, but the World Council of Churches and

(Continued on page 24)

DEWEY R. EDER became pastor of the American Community Church in Beirut, Lebanon, last October. He is a graduate of the Evangelical Theological Seminary located at Naperville, Ill., where he served a 17-year pastorate with the First Evangelical United Brethren Church.

Sermon Excerpts

From Addresses before Chicago Sunday Evening Club

THERE are glimmers in the world's darkness promising that the Christian faith is still a vibrant thing, capable of rebuking our selfishness, convicting us of our sin, and setting our feet on a new path. There are men and women in Africa and Asia and on every other continent who, in the name of Christ, rise above all racial hatreds and call men brother. During the last war there were Christians on both sides of the conflict who prayed for their enemies and suffered with their suffering, even if they regarded the war as necessary and relatively just. In every land today there are Christians who love their nation but know that God is a great judge above all nations rather than the patron saint of any one. In economic strife there are men who rise above personal interest and attempt to treat all men fairly. These all-embracing Christians have a kind of spiritual fellowship with each other. They carry invisible passports. They cannot be stopped by the boundary lines of the world.—*Liston Pope, Dean, Divinity School, Yale University.*

I WOULD like to re-define what we mean by "the American way." It isn't the standard of living, fine as that is. It isn't the mass production, good as it is. It isn't the comforts and convenience that we have. The American way of life was in existence long before any of those things existed at all. The American way of life was born out of the *will for freedom*—the will to freedom even if it took all the comfort, all the security of life itself. It was the discovering that the ordinary man's ability to govern himself and to form voluntary associations to do in this country what only the government did in Europe. It is the belief in separation of church and state with all churches competing and no church having a favorite position with the government of the people. It is faith in man as more than an animal and faith in God as the Director, the Creator and the Savior of mankind.—*Richard C. Raines, Bishop, The Methodist Church, Indiana.*

ONLY those can stray from the beaten path who are committed to a higher loyalty, to a loyalty beyond what people may think, beyond tradition, and beyond custom. I suppose to the scientist it is loyalty to truth. To Gandhi and Nehru it was loyalty to freedom, justice and the Indian people. To the prophets it was loyalty to God. Wasn't it Paul who said, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel?" Wasn't it Jesus who said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he annointed me to preach the gospel to the poor?" Wasn't it Amos who said, "When the Eternal God speaks who can but prophesy?" And Jeremiah who said, "I feel that there is a fire shut up in my bones?" These men rose above their environment and swore ultimate allegiance to their God. No man is free who is not able to rise above his environment.—*Benjamin E. Mays, President, Morehouse College, Atlanta, Ga.*

THERE is a way to win our struggle against war, communism, crime. It is the way that day conquers night. It is the way the light from another planet overcomes darkness on our earth. As in some medieval paintings of the nativity all the light in the picture comes from the face of the Christchild, so the light we yearn for in the darkness of our contemporary world will be the reflected light given forth by the followers of Christ. Religion in education, religion in business, religion in government, religion in personal relationships, ultimately must mean the showing forth by Christians of their faith in the schoolroom, in the office, in daily conduct.—*Conrad Bergendoff, President, Augustana College, Rock Island, Ill.*

IF others were as mean to us as we sometimes are to ourselves, we would cry unto high heaven for justice. Many of us take better care of our automobiles than we do of our own bodies and minds.—*Louis L. Mann, Sinai Congregation, Chicago, Ill.*

JESUS intended that men's minds should be opened by shaking off prejudices. He came into direct collision with accumulated traditions. His was a generation which, like ours, resisted the divine voice and warred against the divine principle. But, in a spirit of meekness that has challenged mature minds across the centuries and around the world, he manifested his divine love. In the mind of Jesus, meekness was not merely patience of injury through tameness, or lack of self-respect. By it he meant steadfastness and poise shot through with spiritual energy, the forbearance of one who though hurt resolves to be just, who never forgets that even the man labeled "enemy" is his brother.—*James Clare Taylor, Bishop, African M. E. Zion Church, Memphis, Tenn.*

A New Plan to Revive the Place of Drama in the Church

The Bishop's Company

By Phyllis Benbow Beardsley

BOTH popular inclination and cold logic have been suggesting that a sleeping giant waits in the form of drama-in-the-church. Many ministers have talked about this potential, but Gerald Kennedy has done something about it by creating the Bishop's Company, the first major denominational effort to sustain a program of drama in the church.

How has it all happened? Bishop Kennedy has followed the very old idea that the church must assume leadership in the arts. If drama-in-the-church is to become a ministry with the power to help tell the religious truths of the church, it must be allowed to gain its own identity as an art form. Otherwise it will forever remain a boy trying to do a man's work.

Remember Fred Eastman's delightful remark which, though humorous, describes all too accurately the modern situation in religious drama: "It is one of the proofs of the indestructibility of the church that it has survived the religious dramas put on in its name."

A New Plan

Rarely will a play done by amateurs reach a standard of excellence which will qualify it for presentation as a worship service. And when it is worthy of this use, there has been no way in which it could be repeated for more than one performance. When a play is done well, should it not be possible to use this vehicle night after night in as many churches as the total program could embrace?

The Bishop's Company was born in answer to that question. As a result, theater personnel has come forward with the know-how, the willingness and even the inspiration to make an important beginning in the modern use of the dramatized word.

Certain concepts have marked the approach of the Bishop's Company.

(1) The plays are presented in the sanctuary of the church, designed as a worship service. The minister of the church presides, and the worship begins with the singing of hymns and a pastoral prayer. The play forms the body of the service.

Use of props and sets of any kind is avoided. Today's audiences, skilled creators in their own right, can supply scenery, properties and elaborate costumes in the mind's eye, far more lavishly than they can be presented in the church with its very limited production facilities.

Serious Purpose

(2) Plays are selected and approved by the Bishop with equal consideration for their spiritual content and their dramatic merit. He knows that the use of the typical "message" or problem play, written simply for a propaganda purpose with no artistic integrity, defeats its own end. Art mediums are effective because they reach both the intellect and the emotion. And consummate skill is required of the playwright to do both.

(3) Actors of the Bishop's Company are chosen without regard for church affiliation. Their interest proves their worth. In many cases it has been found that this activity will bring into vital relationship with the church persons who have not had such an affiliation. Sometime, it is to be hoped, there will be appointed a pastor whose main ministry will be to actors and artists in the entertainment industry.

(4) The actors are all professional and are paid for their performance. Although the amount paid is hardly more than the cost of gasoline and carfare, it is vitally important in principle that the dramatic artist use his God-given talent functionally as well as spiritually in the church.

Conference Table

Musicians, architects and artists have a place in the church program. The same should be true for actors when their contribution has integrity and high purpose to recommend it.

Organizational structure of the Bishop's Company is still somewhat in the experimental stage. Beginning around a conference table with the author as the principal pleader in the case of the lost art, the idea for the Bishop's Company was put before a group of leading pastors. These ministers approved the plan and agreed to serve as a steering committee, leaving actual direction of the company to this writer.

Christopher Fry's *The Boy With a Cart*, selected as the first play, opened quietly and without fanfare at Los Angeles' Vermont Square Methodist Church last January. Bookings came quickly, filling Sunday evenings throughout the year. Midweek dates were then scheduled, and now an out-of-town tour is planned with performances six nights per week.

Thor with Angels, another play by Fry, and one of his finest, has been added to the repertoire as has a production prepared by Henry and Joan Wilcoxon of a play by the former, *Where Is Thy Victory?* An adaptation of *Family Portrait*, by Lenore Coffee and William Joyce Cowan, also is being readied for production. The 1954 schedule will include a dramatization of Alan Paton's novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country*, adapted for drama-in-the-church by permission of the author.

Financial Plan

Financial underwriting of the program is accomplished by means of patron tickets available in the church for several weeks before presentation of a play. Contributions of one dollar are suggested for persons who will make their free-will offering in advance. The total program can be sustained on an average offering of 50 cents per person. Individuals who will give that amount, plus enough for one stranger to come into the church, are given a patron ticket which they put on the plate during the time of the offering.

Average cost per show is $125. With this amount guaranteed for expenses of the Bishop's Company, even a small congregation finds it possible to use a play as a means of raising an additional sum for some project within the church. Although such use of a play is practical and easily devised, it is not to be considered as even a secondary purpose in creation of the Bishop's Company.

A play in a church is meant to be an ingathering, a calling together of the members to share a mutual religious experience. It is intended as a possible ministry to the large percentage of a community's population that does not attend any church on a Sunday. It should serve as an additional voice for the minister, helping

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PHYLLIS BEARDSLEY, director of the Bishop's Company, is both actress and writer, having been active in Hollywood and New York in radio, television and the legitimate theater. Since 1947, her full-time interest has been the revival of serious drama in the church.

him make clear some phase of the church's spiritual message.

A serious concept of the role of drama in the church will attract the dramatic artist, whereas the amateur production will not. The first cast of *Boy with a Cart* was asked to give three nights per week for rehearsal and their Sundays for six months. The only promise of any remuneration whatsoever was that, when it was possible to pay actors, they would receive something. Even with these conditions, serious actors gave their time, and the cast replacement for the run was less than that of the usual amateur production. In the opinion of the director, this earnest approach, combined with strict discipline, is the only atmosphere conducive to creative work in religious drama.

The staff for the Bishop's Company includes Broadway playwright-actor Robin Short, actress Elizabeth Kerr, and Sylvia Meller as production coordinator. Publicity, promotion and public relations are handled by Logan Smiley, George Todt and this writer. Guiding the project is the committee on worship, music and drama of the Southern California-Arizona Methodist Conference, headed by Frank E. Knouse of Los Angeles' Woodcrest Methodist Church, assisted by an advisory committee of seven members.

In a realistic view of the church's problem of evening services, Bishop Kennedy said recently: "The first means of communication for the church is still within the church itself. We believe in the gathering together in the place of worship as a fellowship and no push-button age of radio, television or motion pictures will change this basic philosophy of worship.

"Churches of all denominations are expressing concern about their evening programs. But I think the answer does not lie in simply closing our churches and saying, 'Here, entertainment world, is our total church population. We give it to you; we cannot compete!'

"Drama may be one of the answers. We have millions of dollars invested in these great sanctuaries of worship; our hearts and hopes are in them as a place of security for our people. Let us use them to their maximum, and restore drama to its rightful place in the church."

Bulletin Board Sentences

Contributed by Francis C. Ellis, Community Church, San Dimas, Calif.

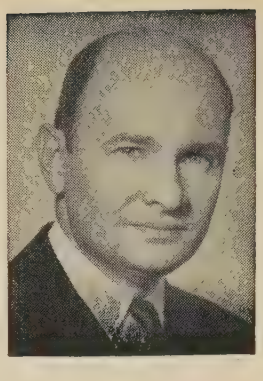
UNLESS WE STAND FOR SOMETHING WE FALL FOR ANYTHING.

TO WORSHIP IS TO KEEP LIFE AT HIGH LEVEL.

PEOPLE WHO PRAY TOGETHER STAY TOGETHER.

THE STARS ARE BRIGHTEST ON THE DARKEST NIGHTS.

ENTER TO WORSHIP; DEPART TO SERVE.



Come Let Us Worship

By Clarence Seidenspinner

The Use of Silence

A WISE adage says, "Speech is silver and silence is golden." We have not always recognized that as a liturgical fact, but there is a persistent tradition to this effect nevertheless. In the oldest eucharistic services, which have been maintained in the churches with the liturgical tradition, there have been moments of divine silence.

I thought of this adage at a recent vesper service in the Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago. For many years this great parish church has maintained a vesper service at 4 p.m. on Sunday. It is a very satisfying service for the reason that the order of worship gives one ample time for meditation. There is a minimum of public speech: a brief invocation, scripture lesson and short meditation sums up the public speech. The rest of the service is music with the emphasis upon organ music—usually from 20 to 25 minutes of organ at the close of the service. As I sat in that beautiful nave again, I thought of the scores of Sunday afternoons in years gone by that I had spent at Fourth Church. This period of organ, which touched the train of my associations and allowed me to meditate and to pray in the presence of consummate beauty, always satisfies me greatly. Undoubtedly, others feel the same.

No doubt a superb sermon can give a man a wonderful lift. It is a great experience to hear a highly intelligent preacher who has thought long and deeply about God's word and its relationship to contemporary life. A living, vibrant preacher brings a feeling of radiant reality to the relevancies of religion. One would go far to hear him. Such men, however, are comparatively few. If the truth must be known, the average homily is a disappointing experience. Consider, therefore, the predicament of the worshiper who hopes for the authentic word of God that will lead to the miracle of communion between God and man.

Churches and ministers ought to give more serious attention to the possibilities of silence as a means of effecting this miracle. Some of this silence ought to be absolute. Larger blocks of it might be filled with blessed music. Most ministers talk too much in their services. Their denominations encourage them to talk even more and to fill the nave, not only with the pastor's voice but also with the voices of assorted laymen presenting any number of bureaucratic causes. The minister ought to ask himself, "If I was in the nave, how would I like to hear my voice most of the time for an hour or more during the service of worship?" The average worshiper must feel the same way. Sometimes he is inclined to say: "If only that minister would sit down and keep still so that I could hear the overtones of Almighty God." What can we do about it?

(1) We can cut down on our talking. Let us preach a full-length sermon that has been carefully prepared. Let us read the Holy Scriptures and offer our pastoral prayer and pronounce the benediction. What else do we have to say?

(2) We can group all the spoken portions. By doing this, we will not be standing and sitting, time and time again, to say something. We can, for example, offer the pastoral prayer right after we read the lesson.

(3) We can plan for silent moments during the service. Directly after the pastoral prayer, for example, we may want to pause for a period of silence in which the worshipers may offer their own prayers to God, or better, in which God may speak to the individuals in the service. The silence may be broken by bells or by the easy movement of the organ leading to some transitional portion of the liturgy.

(4) We can use more music which lifts the human spirit to the divine world. A basic anthem of adoration is able to do this. To ministers and choirmasters who ask what anthem that might be, I suggest the cherubim songs of Bortniansky, Glinka and Gretchaninoff; such anthems by F. Melius Christiansen as "Hallelujah to the Lord" and "Praise to the Lord"; "To Thee We Sing," by Tkach; "We Adore Thee," by Palestrina; "We Praise Thee," by Arensky; "Let All Things Now Living," by Davis; and "God is a Spirit," by Scholin. The most beautiful one is Gretchaninoff's "Our Father," ending with the superb words and music filled with a sense of the numinous:

> Come, O Lord, in splendor bright,
> Fill our hearts with everlasting light.

It is well for preachers who are fond of polishing off their periods to remember the experience of Elijah. In what movement was the voice of God finally found?

Pulpit Paragraphs

Contributed by Readers of The Pulpit

• *Power through Prayer*

LATE on New Year's Eve my congregation sat in silent prayer in the candle-lighted sanctuary. At the stroke of 12 the sexton began to toll the church bell. The slow, doleful tones of the bell were instantly interrupted—almost drowned—by the sharp scream of a siren set off by other observers of the New Year's arrival in a near-by section of the city.

It was as though these two instruments of sound—the doleful bell, the sharp siren—symbolized a clash of the centuries, the schism within modern man's soul. The bell droned of dear dead days almost beyond recall, the siren shrieked of the duties and demands of the present.

Was the bell out of place? Was it only a slow, rhythmic reminder that life at one time moved to a more solemn and stately tempo? Or, was the siren an intruder, squealing in our ears the neurotic tempo of our times?

For a full minute the bell and siren sounded together. Both the old and the new cried for favor. Since the past and present, the ideal and the actual are often in conflict, what was the way to peace and purpose? My momentary confusion cleared as I again became aware that we were engaged in silent prayer. With the Christians of the centuries, in the midst of outer change and inner conflict, we were finding peace and quietness, purpose and power through prayer.—*Galen E. Hershey, Staves Memorial Evangelical United Brethren, Des Moines, Iowa.*

• *God in the Commonplace*

BORGHILD DAHL's book, *I Wanted to See*, tells how she was unable to enjoy the fulness of life because she was completely blind in one eye and had almost negligible vision in the other. As a child she didn't want to be different from the other girls, but when they played hopscotch, her eyesight wouldn't allow her. After the other girls had gone home, she would get down, with her eye almost touching the ground, to learn where the marks were. She grew so familiar with the grounds on which she and her friends played that she became proficient in hopscotch and running games.

Then, at the age of 53, a miracle happened. She went to the Mayo Clinic and, after an operation, her eyesight was improved forty times. She tells in her book how washing dishes became to her a new thrill. She could not only run her hands through the suds but she could hold them up and see the bubbles make tiny rainbows against the light. She could look out of the window as she worked and see the black-tipped wings of the sparrows as they flew through the falling snow. New joy and satisfaction—a whole new world—became hers. She closes that book by saying, "Dear Lord, I whisper, our Father in Heaven, I thank thee, I thank thee, I thank thee." Imagine thanking God for the privilege of washing dishes, of seeing rainbows in dishwater, of watching sparrows fly through falling snow!—*John B. Oman, First Methodist, Trenton, N. J.*

Pulpit Calendar

Jan. 1—Festival of the Christening.
Jan. 3—2nd Sunday after Christmas.
Jan. 3-10—Universal Week of Prayer.
Jan. 6—The Epiphany of Our Lord.
Jan. 10—1st Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 17—2nd Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 17-23—Church and Economic Life Week.
Jan. 24—3rd Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 31—4th Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 31-Feb. 7—Youth Week.
Feb. 7—5th Sunday after Epiphany.
Feb. 14—6th Sunday after Epiphany. Race Relations Sunday.
Feb. 21—7th Sunday after Epiphany. Day of Prayer for Students.
Feb. 21-28—Brotherhood Week.
Feb. 28—8th Sunday after Epiphany.
Mar. 3—Ash Wednesday. First day of Lent.
Mar. 5—World Day of Prayer.
Mar. 7—1st Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 14—2nd Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 21—3rd Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 25—The Annunciation.
Mar. 28—4th Sunday in Lent.
Apr. 4—Passion Sunday.
Apr. 11—Palm Sunday.
Apr. 11-17—Holy Week.
Apr. 16—Good Friday.
Apr. 18—Easter.

SEASONS: Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, Easter.

ALTAR COLORS: Epiphany, white; Lent, Holy Week, violet; Good Friday, black; Easter, white.

(Pulpit Calendar lists dates in the calendar of the Christian year and other observances of national or religious significance.)

• *Only the Spirit Can Save*

IN the 9th century Pope Innocent issued an encyclical against a new and terrible weapon which he felt sure would mean the extermination of the entire human race. So terrible was this weapon, he said, that compunctions of conscience demanded its immediate outlawry. It was the crossbow! When Alfred Nobel discovered TNT in 1890 he made the prediction that his new and powerful weapon would make wars impossible. That's all he knew about human nature. It is sometimes said that if the intelligence of man were channeled in the right directions, we would make humanitarian progress. The truth of the matter is that something qualitatively different from intelligence is needed in order to save our world. That something is a return to the high moral ethics based on the teachings of Christ—ethics built about the concept of love for, and a concern about the welfare of, other people.—*C. O. Basinger, First Congregational, Keokuk, Iowa.*

• *The Light of The World*

AN English pilot during the war told his parson how, when flying over enemy territory, he was caught in the cone of a searchlight from the ground. No matter which way he turned or what stunts he tried, he could not get out of that light. Our task as preachers is so to hold our people in the light of the Word of God that, even though they be uncomfortable and disturbed in it, they may nevertheless be held until won by the "love that will not let us go."—*Harold R. Albert, First English Lutheran, Columbus, Ohio.*

• *Living With the Inevitable*

IN Lillian Budd's novel, *April Snow*, there is a scene of surpassing beauty and power. Johann, son of Sigrid and Peter Kristiansson, has been the victim of a crippling accident. The mother, realizing that her son's legs will never again bear his weight, bravely accepts the fact. With infinite devotion she nurses her child back to physical health and endows him with a feeling of well being and joy.

"How to bring cheer into his fading future" is Sigrid's number one problem. She remembers a saying of his, "I love to crochet, Mama." So she would teach him to use his hands and to weave fabrics of wondrous beauty. He would come to believe that to crochet was a privilege and that he was a chosen one. Then one day his godfather, Johann the sailor, looking upon the lad's work, declared that it was finer than any he had ever seen in any of the great cathedrals—and he had been in many a cathedral! "To make an altar cloth fine enough for a cathedral" became the passion of the handicapped boy's life, adding to it the final touch of dignity and glory.

Four years it took Johann, plying his delicate needle on the hair-like linen thread, to write his magnificent story in a pattern of lace—the story of Jesus on an altar cloth "fine enough for a cathedral." When it was finished the family pastor wrote the story of the cloth and sent it with the cloth

to the bishop. Then came the glorious day when Johann sat with his parents in the cathedral and witnessed the dedication of the work of his hands.

Now Sigrid had her reward! She had seen her crippled child rise from a death of discouragement to a life of hope, from a death of weakness to a life of power and joy. "She has given me everything," said Johann. And the mother, humble and proud, rejoiced in her heart, saying: "It is not what happens to any of us that is of any importance. Johann has taught me this. The only thing that really matters is how we meet what happens to us—how we learn to live with the inevitable—how we think our thoughts to find the good."

This story from fiction teaches us that the important thing is not what life does to us but what we do with life. When life goes to pieces and our purposes are broken off, we may "wince and cry aloud," or we may take the fragments of former dreams and opportunities and suffuse them into a new whole—an altar cloth "fine enough for a cathedral."—*Charles F. Jacobs, First Congregational, Waterloo, Iowa.*

• *The Good and The Best*

GEORGE Washington Carver, the great American Negro scientist, had to make his choice between the good and the best. Just as he was beginning his work at Tuskegee, a painting of his received honorable mention at the World's Columbian Exposition. He was invited to exhibit his paintings in Paris. Possibility of a great career in art opened before him. Should he give his life to art—a worthy ambition—or should he remain at Tuskegee to serve the members of his race? For months the conflict burned within him. Would it never end? Then came the day which all of us face. He made his decision. He would remain at Tuskegee and lift the social, economic and spiritual level of the Negro. He chose the best. Painting—the good—remained with him as a hobby.—*Fred E. Luchs, First Congregational, Evanston, Ill.*

• *The Power of Prayer*

ALEXIS CARREL reminds us that "prayer links us with the power that spins the universe." Prayer is power. It is the power to feel deeply about the things that matter most. It is the power to correct treacherous and wayward impulses and plans. It puts us in position to be a channel through which the power of God can flow. Trench wrote, "We kneel, how weak! We rise, how full of power." We have strange notions about power. We think the atom or the airplane is real power. But if the airplane carries a man who has just learned of his mother's death, it has no power to mend his broken heart. Man's power is mad power. It blasts and bruises. When men attempted to raise the submarine *Squalus*, they used every human device. They failed. Finally they attached floats to the *Squalus* and let the ocean tides do the work of lifting and saving her. Such is the power of prayer. When we are linked with God, we receive power within ourselves and beyond ourselves.—*John G. Simmons, St. Matthews Lutheran, North Hollywood, Calif.*

• *'Let My People Go'*

THE end of May 1952 witnessed one of the world's greatest locust plagues in the Middle East. Swarms of locusts infested enormous areas. The migration began in January in eastern Africa. Month by month the menacing migration developed, even crossing the Red Sea. The plague finally threatened Egypt, Turkey and India.

No Moses was present to stretch forth a rod. The Lord turned no mighty wind to take the locusts away and cast them into the Red Sea as he had done in the time of Exodus.

However, the Lord God, who would have his people freed from the tyranny of war, was present in the situation, for the plague resulted in an unprecedented advance in international cooperation. The United States and the United Nations each threw in a half million dollars. Egyptian, Saudi Arabian, Iraqi, Jordanian and Russian units worked together in the fields. Surely God was in this place! —*Roger J. Squire, First Methodist, Red Bank, N. J.*

Pulpit Post

Another Gem

SIR: Morton Enslin's article, "The Hen and the Codfish" (Oct.) was delightful. It was particularly enjoyable to see him aim his barbed shafts at a pet peeve of my own. Many slogan-users have placed their churches in a category with cut rate drug stores.

The concluding poem calls to mind a gem that I, too, remember from childhood. It raises a point that needs to be seriously pondered by our ecclesiastical hucksters.

The tiger met the lion,
As they drank beside the pool.
Said the tiger to the lion,
"Why are we roaring like a fool?"

"That's not foolish," said the lion
With a twinkle in his eyes;
"They call me king of all the beasts,
Because I advertise."

The rabbit heard them speaking
And ran homeward like a streak;
He thought he'd try the lion's plan,
But his roar was just a squeak.

The fox came to investigate—
Had luncheon in the woods.
Moral—never advertise
Unless you've got the goods.

Methodist, CHARLES M. BRYAN.
Friendsville, Tenn.

Poetic-Prophetic Style

SIR: The poetic-prophetic style, as used by Clyde M. Allison (Sept.) to give conviction to eternal truth, might well be used more in our time. However, the hand of heavy restraint should be laid upon it. The poetic form does not guarantee its prophetic nature, nor is the prophetic truth dependent upon the poetic power to command attention to its living truth. It may readily lead to obscurantism, which was not true of Allison and certainly not of Peter Marshall. Many a good straightforward sermon would be lost in verbiage if most of us attempted a regular practice of this style.

I celebrated my 20th year of Pulpit reading this year and have found the publication a constant source of challenge and encouragement—occasionally of despair.

W. ALFRED WYCOFF.

Grantwood Congregational,
Cliffside Park, N. J.

Enslin Has Promised

SIR: Enslin says (Dec.): "My critics . . . even if they can't get under my skin . . ." Ain't it the truth!

Nevertheless, some time back, I—and I think others—requested the editors of The Pulpit to publish a sermon by Dr. Enslin. Undoubtedly Dr. Enslin does not lack self-confidence; so I presume he has submitted many sermon manuscripts to your staff. Why hasn't one of them been published? Be careful, Mr. Editor; if you turn down too many of his manuscripts, he may put you in a sermon—I mean a column.

Seriously, I wish other readers would voice their opinions in this matter. If enough requests were received, they should influence your editorial staff to print one of his sermons.

For his text I suggest Solomon 2:15, of course referring to The Pulpit editors as the little foxes.

BRICE L. CHIDESTER.

St. John's Evangelical and
Reformed,
Bucyrus, Ohio.

Home Runs

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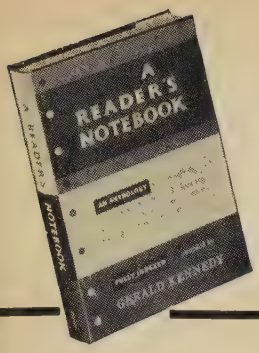

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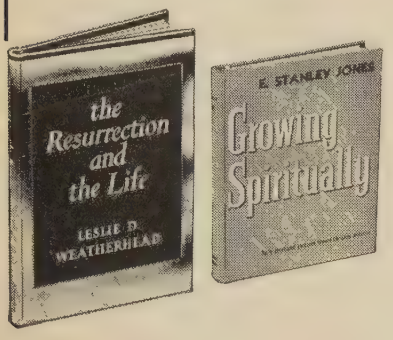

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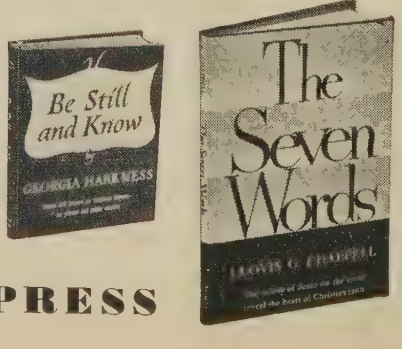

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Are We Afraid of Freedom?

(Continued from page 14)

forming and the nonconforming, the traditional and the dissenting. When we begin to stifle viewpoints because we think they are not safe for people to hear, we have turned in our hearts to Egypt. We are thereby confessing that we really do not believe in the fundamental premise of democracy, that the people given the freedom to speak, to write and to think will in the long run make a sound judgment.

In this 20th century, enough is written on the pages of our history to show that often the church has been the last bulwark against this pressure to conformity. This leads to the really fundamental task of *combating fear with faith.* In the story which is the center of our thinking, that was precisely what Moses had to do. Immediately following, the record says, "The glory of the Lord appeared at the tent of meeting to all the people of Israel, and the Lord said to Moses, 'How long will they not believe in me in spite of all the signs I have wrought among them?' "

Overcoming Fear with Faith

If for a moment we can stand off and see our fear, we may be disturbed by what it tells about our inner lives. Our coins bear the legend, "In God we trust"; but if this were really true, much of our fear would be impossible. Can it be that America and Russia represent two atheisms—one overt, the other secret?

In our great national song "America," we hail God as "Author of liberty." The fundamental message of the Christian church in this crisis of fear is the reminder again and again that freedom is not merely man's will; it is God's. It has been won by men who stood up against incalculable odds, but stood knowing like Paul, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

As believing Christians our task is to fill the vacuum that seems to have come at the heart of a people. If it were not there fear could not have rushed in as it did. If we really believe that God is Author of liberty, then we can remain calm even in the midst of this storm.

I have spoken freely out of a concern that is like a ferment. One could be heartsick as he looks at the fever which seems to have descended upon us. At a time when we need to be especially calm and steadfast, we are threatened with suspicion, accusations and the control of thought. Are we afraid of freedom? If so, we are not worthy of it.

Like Alan Paton in *Cry, the Beloved Country,* we pray God to save us not only from our sins but also "from the fear that is afraid of justice . . . afraid of men." And he can, if we will let him. Thank God, he *can!*

When False Gods Go

(Continued from page 12)

power as we shudder in the dark danger of atomic destruction. Science can teach us to know but not to love. It can teach us to understand but not to behave.

Educationism is a venerable contemporary idolatry. When Wells called civilization "a race between education and catastrophe," he failed to mention the fact that education may be the wrong kind. Education is a means rather than an end. It is to be used in the service of God rather than worshiped as the *summum bonum.* As I go to the presidency of a liberal arts college I go with a keen appreciation of the importance of education, but with no illusions with reference to the futility of learning devoid of the magnificent assumption of the love of God as life's final and foremost imperative.

Wrath of God

Utopianism is a persistent superstition in our American civilization. The idea of the emergent future is an idol on the Mars Hill of America. There is a lingering assumption of "manifest destiny." The glorious westward expansion and the amazing industrial growth which have contributed to the phenomenally rapid rise of American influence have left us with a disposition to serve the god of automatic progress.

"When the half-gods go, the true God appears." The massive facts of the Christian faith are correctives for our idolatrous worship of golden calves, tribes and Baalim. The clouds of divinity come down around Mt. Sinai. Jagged lightning strokes slash through the ominous and awesome blackness. In the crash of thunder comes the voice of God: "You shall have no other gods before me."

The ethical monotheism of the Hebrew prophets is the hope of our present tragic predicament. Lust for gold and lust for power flee before the wrath of God Almighty. The company of Amos, Micah and Isaiah had a bombing range of more than two thousand years. The only cure for obeisance to lesser loyalties is the overpowering devotion to the one true God with such fierce and absolute purpose that all other loyalties find their subordinate place.

Ego-Shattering Power

The redemption of history in the incarnation, ministry, atonement and resurrection of Christ is the "unknown God" which Paul proclaimed to the men of Athens, New York, Washington and Chicago alike. The crucified Lord is the hope of the world. In the victory of Golgotha there is triumph in the hearts of men. We look above and beyond history for fulfillment.

Against the skyline of our cities stand a myriad spires that point to the one God who commands our supreme devotion. The cross of Christ on a myriad altars proclaims the supreme event that split history in two and began a new era of sacrificial love. The fact of God revealed in Christ is the ego-shattering power unto salvation. No wonder the pride of the Aereopagites caused them to say, "We will hear you again about this."

Goethe shows Faust confronted by Satan who tempted him to idolatry. Youth, power, glory, riches and love were his at the devil's bargain. His immortal soul was to be forfeited to Satan as a fair exchange when Faust would say of any object or state of affairs, "Ah stay, thou art so fair." Marguerite with her loveliness charmed him but did not possess him. He was enchanted by the might of political eminence, but he did not yield completely. He could not say of wealth and fame, "Ah, stay, thou art so fair." At last in the soul-wrenching orgy of Walpurgis Night, when the inner crisis ripped him almost in two, he heard the tones of an angel choir reminding him of God through Christ victorious over all the half-gods which the Devil offered. "When the half-gods go, the true God appears."

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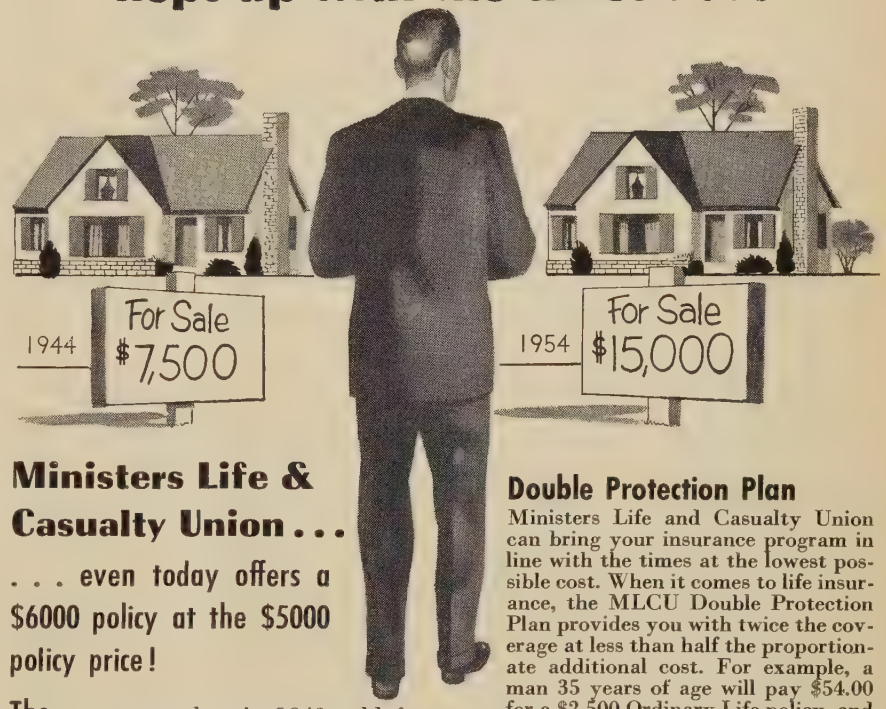

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Bird in the Bush

(Continued from page 15)

the National Council of Churches are evidence that many denominations have concluded that "the bird in the bush is worth two in the hand." The mergers within American Christianity during recent decades are heartening because none of them would have been possible had not two or more denominations resolved to lose themselves in a larger, fuller life together. In some of these mergers, serious problems which could not be solved previously were carried over into the union. The new denomination started out not knowing where it was going but sure that it was moving in God's direction.

Despite all these achievements, does the church give enough evidence of a courageous faith today in a shrunken world faced by so formidable a foe? When the delegates who had walked and worked in hard places told their story to a recent world conference of Christians, many North Americans said to one another: "These our Christian friends from Asia, Europe, Africa and the islands of the sea speak so readily and easily about Jesus and what he means to them that we appear like dumb and doubting followers." It is a sobering fact that today, as throughout the Christian era, the notable achievements of the church seem to be made by people who know no security except that of courageous faith in God.

Investments of Youth

The charges which *Time* made in late 1951 against America's younger generation were extremely serious. Their survey convinced the magazine's writers that most young people today are lacking the spirit of venture which characterized the founding and the frontier days of our nation. They said: "Youth's ambitions have shrunk. Few youngsters today want to mine diamonds in South Africa, ranch in Paraguay, climb Mount Everest, find a cure for cancer, sail around the world, or build an industrial empire." Many of the younger generation are like the student who chose medicine because it looked lucrative, not because he owed some special service to humanity. With complete candor and no apparent shame, he admitted: "I want to get the most out of it for me. I hope to make a lot of money in a hurry. I'd like to retire in about ten years and do the things I really want to do—fishing, traveling, taking it easy."

The saddest aspect of the blighted generation, of which this student is supposed to be typical, is that such a short-sighted, selfish purpose never gives his best a chance. His highest potentialities will always be dwarfed. He will squeeze the bird in the hand only to find some day that he has smothered it to death! That is what would have happened to Sir Wilfred Grenfell had he built up a plush medical practice in London. But what God meant him to become unfolded through the years as he gave himself to "the bird in the bush" in Labrador.

There are glorious exceptions to *Time's* conclusions. Thousands of young people are making an enthusiastic investment of their lives for the good of their fellowmen. Enrolment in the theological seminaries across the country is at an all time high. In one midwestern seminary, a recent matriculating class included a graduate assistant in chemistry, a geologist who had been with a Texas oil company for sixteen years, a young business man, a young woman social worker and a prominent Chicago lawyer who became a student in the seminary of which he is a member of the board of directors. All these believe that a "bird in the bush is worth two in the hand" as like Abraham they start before they know where they are going.

Fresh Ventures of Faith

Nothing wards off hardening of spiritual arteries like a fresh venture of faith. Many a man has made a significant contribution to humanity after the age of retirement. Sometimes it has been the jolt of retirement which has awakened latent gifts and powers within the individual. Experience is a great asset, but it is also a subtle peril. Experience tempts one to lean so much on tired formulas that he becomes sterile of new ideas. That is why Allen B. DuMont of television fame says that young people not handicapped by previous training are best at mastering new television techniques. He warns religious leaders to keep young in spirit, to break old patterns, to get new ideas, to make fresh experiments and not to succumb to the creeping paralysis of mounting years.

Many a man would find it good for his soul to muster up the faith to surrender the security of his position at least once during his productive years and make himself available for a new call from God. A teller in a Pennsylvania bank made such a venture when he took an administrative position to help his denomination feed and clothe the needy of the world. Scores of able pastors would be freed from desk jobs if more laymen did something like that. Some of his friends thought him out of his mind, but he was only letting loose a bird in the hand for a more melodious one in the bush.

At last Mount Everest has been

Title and Text

"No Haven in Tarshish." Jonah 1:1-3—*The word of the Lord came to Jonah . . . saying, "Arise, go to Nineveh." . . . But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.*

RUDY H. THOMAS.
Central Community,
Columbus, Ohio.

conquered. Two men have scaled the 29,002 foot giant of the Himalayas to stand at the top of the world. Why do men engage in this most hazardous of sports? Before he made his ill-fated attempt in 1924, Leigh Mallory said he wanted to make the climb "because Everest is there." When Maurice Herzog, a French Alpinist, had conquered Anapurna, the tenth highest mountain of the world, he said: "Some might call it foolhardy, but I believe it was a difficult struggle for an ideal. Security is not the be-all and end-all of living."

In the wilderness before he began his ministry, Jesus fought his way to the same conclusion. He possessed powers which would have given him what the world calls security, but these he surrendered to take the risks of doing his Father's will. As Studdert Kennedy put it:

He was a gambler, too, my Christ,
He took his life and threw it for a world redeemed.
And ere his agony was done,
Before the westering sun went down,
Crowning that day with crimson crown,
He knew that he had won.

A Pastoral Prayer

By Leslie D. Vesey
Hayes Memorial Methodist, Fremont, Ohio

AS the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth our souls after thee, O God. Our hearts cry out for the living God. We seek the fountain from whence come the waters that spring up unto life eternal.

We thank thee for the freshness of the morning, for the beauty and glory of the universe and for the loveliness of the world in which we live. We would be grateful for the gift of life. Many times we are discouraged by the disorder and chaos of our times; but make us thankful, we pray thee, for the privilege of living even in such a time. Help us to remember that darkness brings out the stars; that trying times make men think, and that trial and tribulation make us dependent upon a power not of ourselves.

It is written that man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of thy mouth. Help us constantly to seek that bread which cometh down from above and to know faith, hope, love and the eternal verities. May we open our heart to the gifts of the Spirit which can redeem life from all that would drag us to the dust.

Make us conscious of thy presence as we are quiet before thee. As Jacob of old on the Judean hillside dreamed of the ladder extending to heaven and the angels descending and ascending thereon, so may we know that our earthly life is of divine significance; that earth hath no sorrows that heaven cannot heal and that life has no problems that are not of concern to thy loving heart. We pray through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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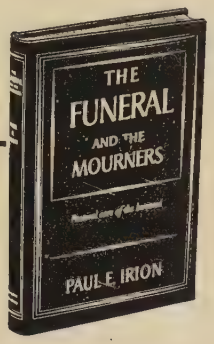
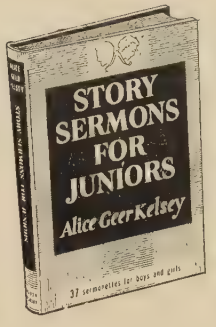
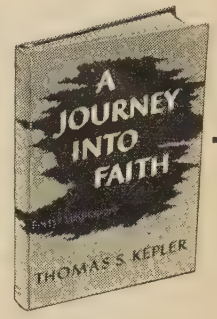


THE FUNERAL AND THE MOURNERS





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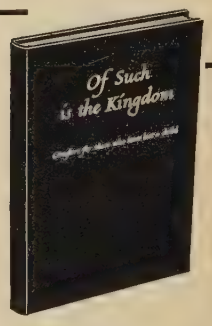
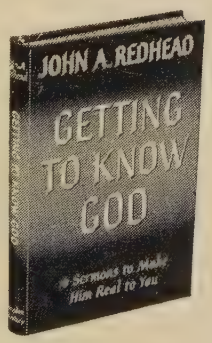


OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM
Leila Tremaine Ammerman

For all who have lost a baby or young child—for all who must minister to bereaved parents—this anthology brings poems, prayers, and scripture passages of comfort and reassurance. Compiled by a pastor's wife who has herself lost a child, here is assurance of God's eternal love and care.

OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM will be useful to friends who wish to express sympathy and to ministers who must prepare funeral services for children. PUBLISHED JAN. 11. **75 cents**

GETTING TO KNOW GOD
John A. Redhead



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Sermon Summaries

The First Mile

By Arthur V. Boand

Highland Park Presbyterian, Dallas, Tex.

"If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles." Matt. 5:41.

WE are exhorted by our Lord that whenever we are compelled by anyone to go one mile, we should go with him twain. But what of the *first* mile?

It is apparent that the first mile is not one of our own choosing. The Greek word which is translated "compel" or "force" had to do originally with the Persian mail. Couriers could impress men or their property into service to carry the king's messages. Hence the word has come to refer to any kind of forced labor.

Again, this first mile is the *hardest* mile, because we Americans, especially, object to being disciplined and react against compulsion in any form. We like to plan our own lives, map out the path in which we would go, do as we please.

The first is the hardest mile because it is an *unknown* mile. Where is it leading and to what destination shall we come? How long and hard and torturous will it be? Will it stretch out across the seas and lead me, in the flower of my youth, to some blood-soaked battlefield?

Christian Duty

There can be no second mile until there has been a first mile. Walking the second mile is our Christian duty and privilege. Walking the first mile is a necessity. A young Yale graduate returned home from a conference of Christian youth and announced to his parents that he was going to offer himself to the Board of World Missions of his church as a volunteer for missionary service in China. "But you cannot do that to me, Bill," his father ejaculated. "Why, I have spent my whole life building up my law practice for you to take over when I retire. Your mother and I have built our entire lives around you, and now you talk of going to China as a missionary." But the young man had allowed himself to come within calling distance and had heard his call. It was a hard, lonely, bitter mile that his father and mother were compelled to walk by his decision. Yet, if his going to China had accomplished nothing else than the complete spiritual regeneration of his parents, it would have been worth the dedication of his life to this service. Once his parents had walked the mile of resignation to God's will and of self-surrender, they willingly traveled a second mile. They went all-out for Christ and the church here at home while their son was rendering heroic christian service in a strange land.

The first mile! "If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles." Our contemporary Christ, who has promised to go with us to the ends of the earth and to be with us always, will be at our side even as we walk the *first* mile.

Better than Compromise

By David E. Witheridge

Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches

ACCORDING to an old fable, there were once two fighting cocks—both touchy birds. Quite aware of their own importance and fighting ability, they bristled defiantly, crowed a challenge to each other, and were immediately off to a bloody battle.

They fought ferociously, but neither was able to gain the slightest advantage over the other. When they finally fell to the ground exhausted and disabled, they had injured each other so badly that never again would either be able to fight in a bout of championship proportions.

As the two bedraggled cocks lay there in the middle of the field, a turkey, who had watched the whole proceedings, wandered over. "My good fellows," he said contemptuously, "what a stupid quarrel *this* has been! There couldn't have been any reason for it except some trivial thing like a piece of corn on the path, or your own silly pride. And what have you gained from it all? Nothing, except that you have disabled each other for the rest of your days."

Resolve Differences

That is the way with most of our human fights. Not only in war, but also in our petty personal quarrels, neither party is truly a winner when the battle is cleared away.

Jesus has good advice for all who get involved in quarrels: "Come to terms with your opponent quickly." In other words, there is no gain in trying to prolong a quarrel, and it is our Christian duty to learn to resolve our differences.

One possible solution for conflict is for one side to be so strong that it can *dominate* the other. When Alexander the Great had conquered the world of his day, he had no rival great enough to challenge him. Possibility of war was greatly reduced, and the art and literature of the Greek-speaking world blossomed in the period of peace that prevailed. The same was true a little later under the victorious Roman Empire. But such peace, dependent on coercion, is unstable.

A better way of resolving conflict is by *compromise*. Every problem has more than one side, and what we need first in any dispute is a calm appreciation of the other side. If we have that, we are ready to admit that compromise is possible.

Whereas, in a system of domination one party takes all the gain and the other all the loss, in compromise each party shares alike in profit and loss. In domination there is only *one* winner; in compromise there are *two*.

What makes labor disputes so exasperating to the general public is the occasional unwillingness of either side to compromise. The Master might have said, "Be quick to come to terms with your opponent, or you may end up in worse distress than you were in before."

But even compromise is not a perfect method, for it is, as the dictionary says, "an agreement reached by mutual concession." For that reason, neither party is satisfied. Instead of two *winners*, therefore, compromise may be thought of as really making two *losers*. The settlement often turns out to be nothing but an armed neutrality.

Creative Integration

It is thus apparent that compromise fails to achieve a perfect harmony between two opposing sides. Is there anything *better* than compromise as a way of overcoming our differences? Yes, there is—the creative, but seldom tried, method of *integration*.

The clue to creative integration lies in a willingness to seek a solution that gets, in so far as possible, what each person really wants. A husband who had heard about the method of integration for the first time said, "My wife and I live together quite peaceably, except for one little matter. She wants the dining-room table in the middle of the room, and I want it placed in the bay window. I don't believe anyone could integrate anything as solid as our dining-room table!" Integration could have been begun by asking what the husband and his wife *really* wanted. Perhaps what she really wanted was to have the table near the kitchen. Perhaps what he really wanted was more light in the room, or a better view of the river. Integration might have been accomplished by merely changing the type of draperies or curtains. That would not have been a compromise, because neither would have had to give up part of what each wanted. Both would have received what they *really* wanted.

Group Decision

Surely integration is the method we should try in a church. For any problem we may have we should seek a *group* decision—a solution that will integrate the insights of all our members. Paul urged each Christian "not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think," but to consider the desires and views of others, "*each* according to the measure of faith which

God has assigned him." The fact that we have "gifts that differ according to the grace given to us" should serve to enrich our group decisions and enable us to come more nearly to the ultimate truth.

Doors of Mystery

By Allen H. Brown

First Presbyterian, Beloit, Kan.
Acts 10:1-35.

A LITTLE girl of about five years, on a subway train in the heart of Chicago, stood with her father in front of the door. As the train slowed to a stop at the Jackson Street station, the door mysteriously opened in front of them. Before stepping out onto the platform, the little girl turned to her father and in childlike wonderment inquired, "Daddy, who opened the door?" What she did not know was that at the other end of the car was a conductor who from his vantage point watched the exits and by the hidden mechanism under his control operated the doors of the train.

There is a mystery about the way the doors of our lives are operated. Life begins in a birth that is mysteriously beyond our control. Doctors, mothers and families, were it possible, would plan the arrival of a child at a more convenient time of day than that at which many of them are born. But, until that door of birth is opened by the Divine Conductor whose laws govern even our entrance into life, all concerned must wait for the child to be born.

A Closed Door

There is a door that, once we have passed it, is closed by the Almighty God forever. In spite of the imagination of the comic strip artist who conceives of a Dr. Womug whose time machine sends Alley Oop and Ooola back into whatever time the mechanical marvel of his machine selects, God's wisdom has made it impossible to open the door of the past.

How often we are sick at heart because one we have known has passed from this life. The news of his death is the beginning of our remorse. Immediately we begin to think, "If only I had told him how I appreciated the things he did for me." Or, "If only I had talked to him about the joys of finding God and serving him in life." But we are too late. The door is closed. He cannot hear our finest excuses; he cannot smell the fragrance of the roses we bring in his honor. We can only pray that God will forgive our neglect and remind us of the opportunities still alive.

A second mysterious door is that of present opportunity which God opens for us. Such a door was opened to Peter while he was staying at the house of Simon in Joppa. As part of a fruitful ministry, he had restored to life Dorcas, a woman known for her charity. News of his preaching and healing had been relayed throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord. But it had never occurred to Peter that there was a centurian named Cornelius who needed his ministry. This centurian, as he prayed, was directed to Peter as the source that would enable him to understand more about God to whom he prayed. And Peter in a vision had his eyes opened to the opportunity for ministry to this man who sought his help. It took a heavenly vision to convince Peter, and only God's Spirit can convince us that those we would call unclean and worthless in humanity are after all creations of God. When Peter could believe that and say, "Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality," and tell his faith to Cornelius and his friends, then the power of the Holy Spirit could transform lives.

Door to Our Hearts

Of even greater mystery is the door of our hearts through which we admit the Lord. Jesus Christ is no Gestapo agent or member of the secret police who beats down the door that stands in his way. This loving Savior dwells only in hearts that welcome him. To have him as our Guest, we must invite him in. In Revelation John describes the Laodicean church as lukewarm and reminds its members that Christ is perpetually saying, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me." The door of fellowship with God has been opened by the atonement in Jesus Christ, and that door no man can shut!

Who controls these doors of mystery —that door which shuts out the failures of the past, that door which opens to the opportunities of the present, that door of fellowship which lets Christ into our hearts? It is God: loving, wise and holy in all his ways. Submit your lives then to this Divine Father.

What to Do with Yourself

By Asbury Lenox

Forest Park Methodist, Lufkin, Tex.

All the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died. Gen. 5:27.

THERE is a lot more to life than just living as long as possible. Methuselah had the longest life in history and the shortest biography.

Man today works less, makes more money, has more leisure time, enjoys better health, retires younger, lives longer than any of his predecessors. Yet these things have not brought into his life peace of mind, contentment of soul, self-discipline or nobility of purpose.

I recommend three great teachings which Scripture, history and experience have shown will lead to a life that is more than length of years. First is Socrates' advice to "*know* thyself." Today we know ourselves better than our fathers did. We know more about our bodies and our minds; we understand more about our moods, attitudes and dispositions.

I like the story of David who declined the offer of King Saul's armor when he went to meet Goliath. He was a good marksman with his shepherd's sling, and he preferred that well-tried though simple weapon to the king's splendid outfit. He knew himself, and, because he stuck to the weapon he was used to, Israel was rid of a tyrant.

Ethical Message

Second of these teachings is "*control* yourself." This advice comes to us from the Romans through Marcus Aurelius. The Hebrews took it and made it an ethical message. It is one of the keys to the city of peace.

An old Negro ex-slave down in central Texas told me, "Anything you can't master is your master." He could have said that about selfishness, temper or alcohol.

People sometimes become unhappy the same way that rivers become crooked—by following the lines of least resistance.

Finally we tune our ears to him who came proclaiming: "It is more blessed to give than to receive"; "Give, and it shall be given to you"; "Sell . . . and give to the poor." "*Give* yourself," taught Jesus of Nazareth.

When Christ gave himself on the cross, he set off a spiritual chain reaction which has continued until today. Men are still giving themselves for the lives of others and for the world, finding the abundant life in doing so. There is Kagawa in the slums of Japan, Schweitzer in Africa, E. Stanley Jones in India. Show me a man who is living a worthy and joyful life, and you will show me a man who is giving himself. The Savior's advice to the lawyer, at the conclusion of his parable of the Good Samaritan, is a message to our generation: "Go and do likewise."

Titles and Texts

"Money — Negotiable Helpfulness." Prov. 19:17—*He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord.*

FREDERICK H. DAWSON.
Riley County Larger Parish,
Riley, Kan.

"Charge That to My Account." Phil. 1:18—*If he has wronged you at all, or owes you anything, charge that to my account.* LLOYD N. WHYTE.
Shenandoah Baptist,
Miami, Fla.

"Needed—Prophets!" Num. 11:29—"*Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!*"

HAROLD A. PRUYN.
Methodist,
Tryon, N. C.

Pulpit Patter

By Morton S. Enslin

'Not Peace but a Sword'

IN a bookstore window not long ago I saw a title that caught my attention. Had not the store been closed—it was Sunday evening—I should have bought the book solely on the strength of its title: *Safety Last.* The title caught my eye, for I was at that moment thinking with high approval of the sermon I had listened to in my own church but a few hours before.

Let it stand herein recorded that I find the sermons in that church highly rewarding, and I know no man whom I would rather listen to, week in, week out, than my own pastor, for his sermons always evidence the fact that he is wrestling with some problem and, like Jacob with the angel, loath to let it go before it blesses him. He doesn't have all the answers, and never pretends that he does have; but he sees problems that are vexing us all and can grapple intelligently and honestly and winsomely with them. That a man *can* think has long seemed to me definitely more important than *what* he thinks. I realize that this will appear utter heresy in many eyes. Undoubtedly it is—any ordination council examination will prove that point—and I cheerfully reiterate it.

No Whipping Boy

I have no slightest intention of repeating or even outlining the aforementioned sermon. Readers of The Pulpit already have all the homiletical fodder they need spread before them month by month without my adding more by way of second hand. My reference to this sermon is for two purposes, closely intertwined. One is to answer by indirection the nervous feeling which I suspect many of the readers of this column have that my own pastor is the whipping boy or at least the fertile source of many of the gentle "tut tuts" which occasionally appear in this patter. The answer to this is easy: he isn't. The other reason is, as I said, closely connected. It is to disabuse the feelings of fraternal sympathy which my beloved friend and pastor, Dr. Rose, has probably mentally evoked in the eyes of those who visualize him, week by week, subject to the cynical note taking of a jaundiced faultfinder. Let the record be clear: I go to church each Sunday because I can't think of a place where I would be happier, and the preacher and I are extraordinarily good friends.

Now to revert to the seed which fell into fallow ground as I walked Philadelphia's streets for a breath of fresh air before the evening service. That title, *Safety Last,* presumably suggested by "Safety First," brought vividly to my mind the first time I saw the slogan. It was back in 1919 when I came up New York harbor on a transport to which I was attached. The sign seemed placarded everywhere, and I found it strange and perplexing.

It has long since become a household phrase. In many ways it is a good one. But, like many things which are true, it appears to me to express but a part of the truth. In so far as it encourages workmen to avoid taking silly and needless chances, or automobile drivers and pedestrians to use a bit of their (presumably) God-given intelligence, it is all to the good. If it leads us to prize security as the be-all, end-all of the human quest, it is in my judgment all to the bad. Now that *rock-ribbed individualism* and all for which it stood has become for many a cuss word nearly as awful as *damn,* I look with ill-concealed concern at the growing tendency of the American Way of Life (new style) to subordinate everything of daring and venture to security and protection and freedom from worry. There are many things, it seems to me, we should worry about, and the chief of these is the fact that we have been lured or intoned into thinking that there is nothing worthy of worry.

Peace of mind, peace of soul—these are mighty meretricious slogans. Of course there are values, tremendous values, in what our modern prince of American preachers has styled "living serenely," with unwise and clamorous confusion calmed and still. Few love that hymn and all that it implies more than I, and I surely hate confusion and crowds. But there is another side. It is time for concern when folks are finding repugnant and uncouth the honest feeling of discomfort and discontent at a religion which can be styled "quiet." No religion worth its salt can or ever should be a "quiet religion." Religion should stir us and make us dissatisfied, not only for tomorrow but for today; should not quiet and lull us to serene peace within the everlasting arms, for if there is any quality depicted in letters of fire in the character of the God, whose we are and whom we ought to serve, it is that of discontent and dissatisfaction.

Thirst for Improvement

No invention, no insight, no concern has ever come from the mind or heart of a man—or God—satisfied and at peace with himself or his world. Thankfulness for blessings attained? Indeed yes; but with a thirst and a never-to-be-quenched passion for more and better things.

Yes, I am frank to confess that I dislike intensely the term, now so popular, "retreats." It is nearly as obnoxious as "cell." As for me and my house, we'll vote for Isaac Watts: "Since I must fight if I would reign, increase my courage, Lord!"

Made-to-Order Minister

A palpitating pulpiteer,
A man who will not fear,
Of gracious manner, worldly-wise,
To sweetly generalize.

Who for the right will go to bat
Just like a diplomat,
In every way the wrong denounce—
Excepting where it counts.

C. W. VANDENBERGH.

Treated Like a Lady

A WOMAN addressing the Keyport, N. J., chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous, illustrated the fact that a helping sense of self-respect can be created by the understanding attitude of others. Her sorry story unfolded in the usual manner. In her desperation she had turned finally to a Protestant minister in the community. "He knew all about my past. He did not scold me, nor point the finger at me as I had feared. My whole life turned toward God, and I got help for my problem, because he treated me like a lady. I hadn't been treated like a lady for a long, long time."

We cannot lightly dismiss the basic fact that there is something in human life which makes us want to be what others think we are.

"Jesus looked at him, and said, 'So you are Simon the son of John? You shall be called Cephas.'"—*Roger J. Squire, First Methodist, Red Bank, New Jersey.*

Non-Prophet

The church cannot afford to become a non-prophet organization.—*Graham R. Hodges, First Congregational, Ticonderoga, N. Y.*

Books in Brief

★★★THE STORY OF JESUS. By **Theodore Parker Ferris.** Oxford, $2.30. Forewarned by the author we are ready for his own interpretation of the life of Jesus at every turn. This is really a book of sermons hammered out of the events of the Jesus story. Beautifully told, simple in language, abounding in new insights and interpretations, it will send the homiletician exploring new roads in his attempt to make the gospel relevant. Do not read it expecting a theological treatise nor the revelation of the Son of God. It is the human Jesus, making decisions, leading men, understood in the light of the needs of contemporary man.—*Donald F. Irvin, Professor of Christian Education, Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary, Maywood, Ill.*

THE RECOVERY OF HUMANITY. By **James D. Smart.** Westminster Press, 157 pages, $2.50. This is a timely book of 17 short expository sermons by a prominent Canadian (Toronto) preacher who believes that "Biblical preaching has become a lost art." The intelligent interpretation and practicality at the heart of most of these sermons will help to restore the popularity of expository preaching. At the same time, for many readers, the book will strongly undergird their sagging faith, and through them help to decrease modern man's godless and desperate inhumanity. — *Virgil A. Kraft, Methodist Chaplain, University of Chicago.*

★MORE CHILDREN'S WORSHIP IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL. By **Jeanette Perkins Brown.** Harper, $3.00. This excellent book deserves a wide reading by pastors. Its direct use is indicated for the elementary departments of the church school. Pastors will find it a rich source book, however, for liturgical materials and a general inspiration toward relating worship to the life of the congregation.—*Clarence Seidenspinner, First Methodist, Racine, Wis.*

LIVING IN FOUR DIMENSIONS. By **Gaston Foote.** Revel, $2.00. Most of these topical sermons deal with problems confronting mankind—worry, fear, doubts, security and unanswered prayer. Dr. Foote views each problem with clear insight, then suggests solutions based on eternal truths, never resorting to generalities or superficial patter. As always, he utilizes a number of excellent illustrations. All of the sermons reflect the dynamic and dramatic preaching of one of America's best preachers.—*Norman Donald Newman, Methodist, Jeffersonville, Ohio.*

★WAR, COMMUNISM AND WORLD RELIGIONS. By **Charles S. Braden.** Harper, $3.50. An interesting and informative account of the impact of war and communism upon the organizations and ideals of the great religions of the world. With information derived largely from travel and personal conversation, Dr. Braden, an authority on the history and literature of religions, paints a picture of current religious thought and life in the near and far East. Although not so well organized as it might have been, this book is encyclopedic in its scope. The final chapter's climactic contrast between the ideals and methods of Christianity and communism is a splendid formulation. Well worth reading.—*Robert I. Kahn, Temple Emanu El, Houston, Tex.*

★★MUSIC IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. By **Edith L. Thomas.** Abingdon-Cokesbury, 160 pages, $2.00. An interesting, thorough and competent treatment of the ways music is being, can be, and ought to be, used, with emphasis on work with children. While making no reference to the educational values of hymn dramas, and passing over the lilting melodies of the better gospel songs, this volume covers the field well, giving workable suggestions to those who "want to" but lack the "know how."—*Ernest K. Emurian, Elm Ave. Methodist, Portsmouth, Va.*

LESSONS IN SUCCESSFUL LIVING. By **Albert E. Cliffe.** Prentice-Hall, $2.75. "God, being all good, can never send sickness. . . . The sicknesses we meet can all be cured. . . . You can never be sick, you can never be poor, you can never fail at your job." Such convictions caused this born-again Canadian chemist to lose 27 years of ulcers and to be the channel for 700 healings in 15 months. He would have everyone "happy, carefree, healthy, freed from all worries." "The people who fear epidemics, who fear disease, who fear cancer, will tend to produce them." He also insists that tithing is the first step into the Kingdom.—*James V. Claypool, Secretary, American Bible Society, Chicago, Ill.*

WHEN A MAN PRAYS. By **Arthur A. Rouner.** Revell, $2.50. The author attempts to explain prayer in terms of scientific principles. He tries to make prayer logical and plausible to those who think there is a gulf between science and religion and to those who want to pray but find it difficult because of intellectual hazards. The book makes a significant contribution toward understanding prayer as a means of communication.—*John Edward Lantz, Lowell Heights Methodist, South Bend, Ind.*

WITHIN THESE BORDERS. By **John R. Scotford.** Friendship, $2.00. With the changing missionary emphasis necessitated by growing nationalism and the resulting indigenous church in fields overseas, this book presents factually the Christian opportunity and obligation to labor among the Spanish-speaking peoples in the U.S.A. Helpful sermonic material which could conceivably move from the preaching to the practicing faith is present in abundance. Most of the volume reveals how priest-and-Levite-like we are, passing by on the other side of need in our land. The last chapter, "What Shall We Do?" suggests that the role of the Good Samaritan is still available for sincere aspirants.—*Dale S. Bringman, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Harrisburg, Pa.*

(★★★★You can't afford to be without it; ★★★Unusually valuable to the preacher; ★★Above average in its field; ★A good buy; No Star, depends on your taste and need.)

Books Preachers Are Reading

An analysis based on reports from leading religious booksellers and from the reading of the Pulpit's distinguished editorial associates and book reviewers.

November	December	This Month	
5	3	1	**Report from Christian Europe.** *Stewart Winfield Herman. Friendship Press,* $2.50
8	5	2	**What Present Day Theologians Are Thinking.** *Daniel D. Williams. Harper,* $2.00
1	2	3	**The Unfinished Reformation.** *Charles Clayton Morrison. Harper,* $3.00
2	1	4	**Preaching on Controversial Issues.** *Harold A. Bosley. Harper,* $3.00
10	4	5	**The Kingdom of God.** *John Bright. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* $3.75
9	6	6	**The Christian Society.** *Stephen Neill. Harper,* $3.50
	9	7	**Quest for Christian Unity.** *Robert S. Bilheimer. Association Press,* $2.50
	8	8	**Protestantism in America.** *Jerald C. Brauer. Westminster,* $3.50
	10	9	**The Recovery of Family Life.** *Elton and Pauline Trueblood. Harper,* $1.50
		10	**Christian Realism and Political Problems.** *Reinhold Niebuhr. Scribners,* $3.00

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

BELATEDLY, as usual with me, I have just seen Martin Luther on the screen. When I came out there was a queue a block long, four deep, waiting to get in for the next showing. The picture made a profound impression on me as it seemed to do on the whole audience. It was a daring thing for the producer to undertake, but he was backed by a guarantee fund of a half million dollars raised by a Lutheran organization. The 16th century scene in Germany is reproduced with remarkable fidelity. The subordinate characters—Melanchthon, Spalatan, the Elector Frederick, the Pope, Charles V, Tetzel and the common people—were portrayed with historical verisimilitude. Luther himself seemed to have just stepped out of the pages of Roland Bainton's book, *Here I Stand*—in form, countenance and action the veritable Luther of the Reformation. One thing only it lacks. It does not present an adequate cause for so vast and profound a revolution. The Reformation seems to turn on a single text of Scripture and Tetzel's sale of indulgences. But Luther's tremendous attack upon the apostate character of the whole hierarchical system of the Roman Church is not brought out. Obviously, the producer did not wish to arouse religious controversy, and he was successful. No serious criticism from Catholic sources has appeared. But this historical inadequacy should not be glossed over by any appraisal of the drama. One other thought. I could wish that the sponsorship had included other Protestants with the Lutherans—for example, the National Council of Churches. For Luther belongs not alone to Lutheranism but to the whole of Protestantism.

Luther in the Movies

The Books of the Month

THE KINGDOM OF GOD, *by John Bright (Union Theol. Sem., Richmond, Va.), Abingdon-Cokesbury, $3.75.*

THE FULLNESS OF TIME, *by John Marsh (British Theologian). Harper, $3.00.*

A PULPIT reader asks me to name a book or two that will illustrate the way modern scholarship reads the Bible, so that he can "distinguish it from the way Fundamentalism reads it." My correspondent's desire, I believe, is shared by many Bible students, including many ministers, who are not yet fully convinced that the whole Bible is oriented within an eschatological framework which gives meaning to both Old and New Testaments, to history, and to human existence in history. Though I am fully convinced that this conception of the Bible and of the historical beginnings of Christianity is inescapable, I have not yet been able to make a full commitment to it by the act of faith which it requires. And yet no alternative conception seems to offer a credible answer to what Professor Tillich would call my "ultimate concern." From my shelf of more than a score of books in this field, I have taken down two to recommend to my correspondent. John Bright finds the dominant and unifying theme of the whole Bible to be the Kingdom of God, which he holds is an eschatological, not a utopian or a moralistic, concept. John Marsh traces through the whole Bible the various meanings of "time"—*kronos* (clock time), *kairos* (crisis, or opportunity), and *aion* (the age, or the age to come, or eternity). Both books are exegetical. Are they interesting? Are they fascinating? Are they easy reading? Answer: No reader of The Pulpit will lay either book down until he comes to the end.

A Thought for the Month

YOU are a pastor. But you are also a preacher. As a preacher are you also an evangelist? I do not mean to suggest that the pulpit and the service of worship should be narrowed to the sole function of winning converts. Edification of the church is as important as recruiting new members. But the same gospel that wins men to Christ edifies them in the faith. And the same gospel that edifies the faithful makes converts. The gospel has to be perennially interpreted, illumined and applied to the experience of those committed to it. This is the task of the pastor as preacher. Few are the modern pastors who so conceive their preaching function. Our theological seminaries are not seriously preparing pastors for this high and difficult and fundamental task. Their graduates tend to fall into one or the other of two categories: (1) theological scholars competent to teach theology in other seminaries, but sadly unprepared to preach the gospel in churches; (2) pastors equipped with an elaborate kit of techniques or methods of sermon preparation, or religious education, or pastoral counseling, or management of church organization, but with a minimum knowledge of the Bible and a too shallow conception of the social gospel. It all comes back to the homiletics department. A professor of homiletics should himself be a theologian—the peer of his colleague professors of theology—who knows what the gospel is and how to preach it, and can teach others to preach it. The hiatus in the seminaries between theology and homiletics is chiefly responsible for the sophomoric triviality of the pastoral pulpit.

The Pastor as Evangelist

Charles Clayton Morrison

For the Record—

LONG-TIME READERS of The Pulpit must have felt a personal oss at news of the death, on Dec. 7, f Thomas Curtis Clark. Mr. Clark vas known throughout the church vorld as a poet of Christian faith nd as an unsurpassed compiler of nthologies of religious poetry. There nust be few American pastors who ave not quoted from his poems in heir sermons, or do not have *Quotble Poems*, or others of his antholoies, in their libraries. Another of hese anthologies is just about to apear under the Association Press imrint. Was there, perhaps, some ntimation of what was in store when e gathered it as *The Golden Book of mmortality?*

To Pulpit readers, however, Mr. lark will be best remembered as the an who, more than any other, gave is paper the character which it ears—and which it will go on bearing s long as it is published. For it was Ir. Clark who, when Charles Clayton lorrison launched The Pulpit in 1929, ecame its managing editor. He held at post until he retired in 1948. He ade most of the selections of sermons be printed, of sermon texts and pics, of illustrative paragraphs and, course, of poetry.

When one thinks of the multiidinous duties Mr. Clark discharged s an associate editor of the *Christian entury*, as editor of the *20th Century uarterly*, as an active partner in the ook-publishing house of Willett, lark and Company, while all the time riting his poems, selecting his nthologies and contributing scores of rticles to other publications, one onders how he ever accomplished so uch. He had a calm at the center hich controlled all his hours. It enbled him to do three or four men's ork. It was an unfailing reflection the influence of a controlling faith.

Here are lines he wrote, not his ost quoted but a true picture of the an:

WHEN I am old, and days crawl limp and slow,
hen I am free from toil and weariness,
hen I shall calmly sit till sunset glow
ecounting all the hours God sent to bless.
en thousand dawns shall come again to me
o loose me from the fear of shrouding night;
ld-fashioned gardens limned by memory
hall haunt my noontide with their pure delight.
oft, through the windows, tender words shall come,
oices I knew when life was April-sweet;
hen I shall sing, no more shall I be dumb;
outh shall return, to make my joy complete.
hen I am old, and quieted all strife,
y heart shall say, How good, how kind, was life!

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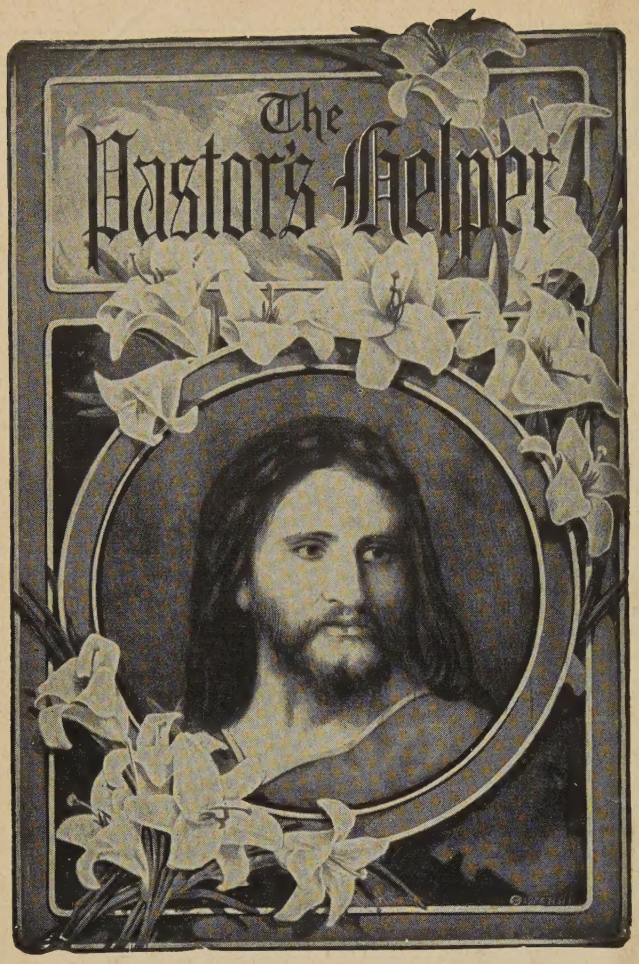

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